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# *'JOHANNES OLAF'*

BY

ELIZABETH DE WILLE

*TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN*

BY

F. E. BUNNETT

VOL. I.



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# JOHANNES OLAF.

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## *BOOK THE FIRST.*

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE FAMILY MEETING.

‘PUT the horses to!’ shouted Bror Jan from the shed where his workshop stood, and his broad powerful hands rested a moment from their work; ‘we will have a holiday, and will go over to Westerland and see brother-in-law Hinrich.’ Bror Jan was the wealthy smith of Oevenom, a town in the Friesland island of Föhr.

Frau Keyke glanced at her husband with surprise; but, with the taciturnity peculiar to Friesland women, she gave no further expression to her astonishment, but called her servant, who was a relation of her own, down from the hay-loft,

and ordered her to polish up the harness and to get the horses ready ; then she gathered together the straw which she had cut to cover the embankment in front of the house, and went into the kitchen to place the tea-kettle on the turf fire, so that the water might boil quickly when they returned in the evening. The children were ready, and as it was a workday, the master smith and his wife attired themselves in only half their Sunday state. The vermilion-painted vehicle was reached with the help of a ladder, and the party drove off. Frau Keyke held the reins, after the custom of the island, where agricultural matters are consigned to the women.

For some distance they drove along the embankment: the sea lay calm—an immeasurable, shining, blue expanse—with its muffled roar audible in the distance. Then the road turned landwards, between high corn-fields. Wheat and barley were already fully ripe—a sea of ears, straight and still under the burning July sun ; and the horses, fat and well fed, unaccustomed to the labour of a journey, slowly and pantingly pursued their way. But when they reached the highland which succeeds the marshes, like the lean kine coming up after the fat kine in king Pharaoh's dream, the advance was only made step by step in

the deep sand ; and with glowing faces, and covered with dust, the party arrived at Westerland, in front of Hinrich's stately dwelling.

The men had some matters to arrange with regard to a small inheritance which had fallen to the family. An aunt, about whom they had never concerned themselves, because her husband was only a Dane, had died childless, and had remembered her brother's children in her will. The master smith would not perhaps have undertaken the expedition for pleasure's sake, for the race of Frieslanders inhabiting the islands is not alive to allurements and excitement. Time here brings with it nothing new ; uniform as the roar of the sea round the flat, treeless, and partially fertile islands, is the character of their inhabitants—the world of fantastic imagination and passionate dreaming is scarcely to be transported hither. The people, however, are true, faithful, moderate, and prudent, undismayed at danger, and calm amid the blows of fate. So long as they are young and strong, the men go to sea and the women attend to the land, keeping things in order and increasing the possessions.

Just as the costume of the people has continued unaltered and original, so is it with household implements, habits of life, and customs—the new



meets with little sympathy, and the old order of things is held in esteem. Silently, with that inclination to thoughtful meditation peculiar to the Freislander, lives the old mariner, who is fortunate enough to be able to find repose from active life in his cabin-like dwelling-room. The berths against the wall form the sleeping-place : the room is low, wainscoted with wood and gaily painted ; the plates and glasses are kept in secure cupboards, the table and benches stand firm as though no rolling sea should overturn them and dash them to pieces ; and the ornament of the room, its pride and treasure, is a ship, the portrait of the brig or the three-master, or perhaps only of the little coasting schooner, in which the old man once made his voyages.

Broad-shouldered and powerful as the master smith, was the figure of the Captain Hinrich who came forward to meet his guests. The men had soon arrived at a just and equitable agreement with regard to the disputed points of the property, and sat together enjoying the pleasures of conversation with as few words as possible. Newspapers a week old, which made the round of the island, gave occasion for a remark or two as to the doings of the world and the restless children of men. But earlier than appeared necessary in

such long days, the smith knocked out his pipe, and suggested departure.

‘You are going perhaps to brother-in-law Jakob, to arrange matters there also with respect to the property?’ enquired the Captain.

‘It were best, certainly,’ said the smith, ‘only sister Goneril is so strange.’

‘That God knows,’ said the Captain, and he asked his wife whether she had any fancy to go with them to her sister? Frau Göntje, instead of replying, proceeded to the stable, and while with the help of her servant she got the vehicle ready, she bethought herself of how long it was since she had seen her sister. Ten years ago they had been present at a christening in the school-house, and since that time they had never been there. Not that they had quarrelled or had entertained any ill feeling towards each other: it had only fallen out so—Goneril lived in the remote highlands, and horses and carriage were not kept for driving about. Frau Göntje thought how she had been married on the same day as her sister, and how she, the younger, had had the older man, the widower, but the rich commander of a three-master, while Goneril’s bridegroom had been *only* a schoolmaster. The pretty woman for once let her mind wander to the past, which generally lay

as if dead on her dull imagination, and she sighed a little, and with a touch of emotion stroked the hair of her fair little daughter, as it fell over the tender face from beneath the cotton head-gear.

It was by no means a small house—two storeys high, the bell under the cross-beam of the gable proclaiming it the school-house—at which the carriages drew up after a drive through the sand. A woman of such tall stature that she seemed to tower above the men, came down the stairs and slowly opened the door. In spite of her five-and-thirty years, she possessed unusual beauty. There was something of pride and energy in her bearing, and an almost dignified gravity suited her features and her hard blue eyes. The dress of the island, which unbecomingly conceals the figure, seemed ennobled by the bearing of the woman. She had carelessly twisted a black kerchief round her head, so that her rich fair hair fell over her neck, leaving her forehead bare.

‘It is you,’ she said with a fine alto voice, greeting her guests somewhat coldly. ‘If I only knew where to dispose of your horses.’

It struck the guests that Goneril did not meet them with the usual ‘Welcome,’ nevertheless the brothers and sisters shook hands. Nothing more

is customary here among the closest friends after the longest separation.

The visitors were scantily provided for, and the visitors went into the dwelling-room. It was a small narrow, dark room, with only one window, at which Goneril had been sitting with her spinning-wheel. The adjoining apartment, where the school was held, was larger, but the benches were empty on this day, and the dust which the scholars had brought in lay thickly on the floor, as if it had been long collecting.

‘Sister Goneril,’ began the smith, when they had sat opposite each other for some time, ‘we are come—’

‘I know,’ she said, interrupting him; ‘Aunt Tat is dead. She is *your* father’s sister, and no relation of *mine*.’ A blush of anger suffused the face of the smith, but he constrained himself, and asked the sister where her husband was.

‘You can look for him, where he is to be found every evening when it is as sultry as it has been to-day,’ she said, ‘on the shore, an hour from here. It is on your way home; but if you like to wait for him, I will make some coffee.’

Little at ease as they felt, no one declined this, for to do so would have been an insult to the

house ; so the coloured water, prepared by Goneril's hand, was soon placed in a shabby coffee-pot on the table.

They drank and sat opposite each other. No conversation, however, was effected, and Goneril did not spice the beverage with friendliness. Frau Keyke glanced round the room and thought it scantily furnished and untidy ; it did not escape her keen eye that there were only a few scanty pillows in the bed, while it is the custom of the country to sleep almost smothered under feather beds ; she saw also that Goneril's petticoat was threadbare, and in some places as thin as a cobweb ; and Frau Göntje had gathered, from the almost scornfully evasive answers of her sister, that for some time she had no longer kept a cow, and that this year she had neither pigs nor poultry.

'And we knew nothing of it,' she said, pitifully, casting a glance at her husband.

'Better times will come,' said Goneril, calmly. 'All your splendour and wealth, Ocke Hinrich, even if you are as rich as people say, and could buy from the king at Copenhagen that part of Westerland which is pledged to him, cannot alter the fact that she whom you call your Frau Schwester has the poorest husband in the country. And I

desire nothing from you ; I wish to be alone, and to eat no one's bread but my own.'

'Thou art ever the same,' said the smith, while the captain shook his head, and Frau Keyke, only from fear of her brother-in-law, restrained her biting words. The school-master's wife drew up her figure to its utmost height, but she said nothing more, and all were silent.

The room was dusky with the evening twilight, when Jakob at length came home. He was a man of a pleasant countenance, barely nine-and-twenty years of age, of a slender figure ; but he looked sickly, his chest was hollow, his voice sounded weary, and the red spot on his cheeks, less than his bright lustrous eye, told plainly that he was consumptive. He had extended his hand to all with lively heartiness. He threw down his knapsack on the floor, walked across the room, and called his boy, who was amusing himself with the horses outside, that he might show him to his relations. A happy smile flitted over the face of the father. Goneril, his wife, with her tall figure and serious air, looked by his side like the frigid genius of the house.

All, however, had grown weary of waiting and silence in Frau Goneril's company, and the men hastened to bring to a conclusion the business about

which they had come. Goneril went out into the adjoining room, when her husband, laughing with delight at the prospect of property, wrote his name at the place assigned to it, 'for that which the law awards to your wife you shall receive from us, in spite of her foolish words,' the smith said to his brother-in-law. She did not return until all was settled, and the relatives had equipped themselves for departure. She stood in the door-way, with the setting sun lighting up her head, to look after the carriage as they all drove off, and her boy Johannes ran along for some distance by the side of the horses. Jakob, however, went up to his chamber in the gable of the house, where he kept his treasures—the wealth and the joy of his life. Quickly emptying his knapsack, he threw the shells and zoophytes, which he had picked up, in a confused heap, and drew out a couple of little bladders filled with oil-colours, which he had fetched from Wyk, where he had ordered them from the continent. With beaming eyes he looked at the paints, tried them on his nail, and rubbed a little on the palette. Then he brought near the window a stand composed of rough beams, fastened together in the form of an easel; and turning round a half-finished picture resting upon it, that it might catch the last beams of the evening light, he

regarded it from different points of view. But utter darkness soon came on. Weary and exhausted, he threw himself on his bed and closed his eyes.

Goneril meanwhile went to look after her son, and put him to rest near herself in the bed against the wall. She was accustomed not to concern herself about her husband, but to leave him to himself, whether sleeping or waking.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE SCHOOL-MASTER.

A SEVERE winter had followed an unusually hot summer and short autumn. Snow and ice kept the dwellers in the different valleys apart from each other. Those who were not compelled to go out preferred sitting by the warm stove in the close cabin-like rooms, for the wind which dispersed sea-fog swept across the sand levels of the highlands and over the bare fields of stubble.

Want and sickness seemed that winter to enter the school-master's house as their own abode. Jakob could not endure the cold; in a state of feverish excitement, or utter exhaustion, he kept school or let his scholars run about, just as it chanced. Careful parents sent their children to school in the nearest villiage.

'They will dismiss you, Jakob,' said Goneril; and, with a tenderness alien to her hard nature, she held out her hand to him.

For a moment perhaps a feeling of anxiety would cross the school-master's mind; but no

sooner were the children gone, their noise hushed, and he alone in his room—where he had a small stove, the turf for heating which had hitherto never been lacking—than a feeling of happy light-heartedness would come over him, and he would cast aside the cares of life with the rapid power of imagination. He knew no anxiety for the morrow. When his cough disturbed him, and he was too weary and exhausted, he would put his shells and zoophytes in order ; at other times he drew and painted. His room was filled with pictures, for the most part subjects from the Bible ; compositions not devoid of spirit, and which he had designed with charming unconstraint and ease. The figures were chiefly life-size ; but only a few of the pictures were finished ; the greater number had been laid aside as sketches ; for some time Jakob had painted in oils, and he had succeeded in producing a strangely life-like colouring.

Meanwhile Frau Goneril sat below in the desolate school-room, knitting and spinning, often far into the night, in order to fill up the gaps which Jakob's favourite pursuits made ever further and further in the small economy. For days she would sit alone, not speaking with anyone ; she seemed moreover to want no one ; only occasionally

she would gaze over the level in front of the house, where her boy Johannes was at play, bare-foot in storm and tempest or with worn-out shoes, and she would fancy how her boy would go to sea and travel round the world,

So far as the sun goes,  
And as the storm-wind blows.

And the spirit which gave its impress to her beauty would come over her. Goneril's was a passionate nature which consumed itself inwardly. She had power and courage for much in life; but anyone seeing her at work in the house, patiently, silently performing it with stoical perseverance, would have thought her an apathetic character. People said, moreover, that she loved nothing rightly, not even her son. Her capacity for love seemed also in some measure connected with the pride with which she thought of her origin. Goneril was a child of love. Her mother, the wife of the brave Jan Ketel, had forgotten her conjugal fidelity for the sake of a stranger who had been shipwrecked on the island, and who, after a short sojourn there, had departed, never more to return. The name of the stranger was Adam Thorson; his home was Iceland. No one knew more of him than this, not even the woman who for his sake had imperilled both soul and

body. But his unusual appearance had remained like a legend on the lips of the people; and as Goneril grew up and became more beautiful than her brothers and sisters, and utterly diverse from them, her mother, whose heavy sin had been forgiven by her husband, told her, with secret tears, of Adam Thorson, and Goneril felt herself among her brothers and sisters like the royal child in the fairy tale, who, conscious of her noble descent, assumes the bearing of a lofty spirit as a jewel from the ancestral crown. Endowed by nature with a kind of wild poetic feeling, she loved the sea as though it were her father's kingdom and her own natural home.

Jakob, the young schoolmaster, had married her when all other wooers were kept aloof more by the pride of her character than by her birth. He had passionately loved her. In vain he had been dissuaded from the union; it seemed as though he could not do otherwise. He followed her when she sat in her wild solitude by the sea, watching nets, or when she went out with the sailor who employed her; spreading the sails or helping to row in storm and tempest. Her noble countenance and stately figure inspired him with ever new admiration, and enthralled by her fascination he remained lost in gazing at this strange woman.

During the year and a half that he had been preparing himself at Husum to be a schoolmaster, he had read and heard many things; and naturally endowed with imagination, he had returned to his quiet village without finding the suitable object for the restless yearnings of his mind. Scarcely twenty-one years of age, he had entered upon his office. A few books on natural history, some volumes of German poetry, and a collection of northern Sagas, badly translated, were, in addition to his school-books and the Bible, the treasures which he had accumulated by sparing, and which he brought with him into his new home. Goneril ruled at his hearth as silently and seriously as he had known her on the seashore. They had been married for eleven years, and had done much good and little wrong towards each other; yet their hearts were disunited, as though they were by nature utterly different. They had indeed no expression for that which they were to each other, and that which they could not be. Who can explain that riddle of attraction, of that power which is produced among men by the web of an inner necessity? We see natures seeking and finding each other, repelling and remaining alien to each other, in spite of all sympathy and fidelity, just in those deepest and most peculiar

feelings which desire in vain to expose and reveal themselves. The schoolmaster and his wife had neither expression nor distinct consciousness of this, yet each felt it in their own way.

It was the wish to retain the impression which Goneril's beauty had made upon him, which first suggested to the young schoolmaster, in the uniformity of his life, to try his hand at drawing and painting. From childhood he had had the fancy for copying what he saw. He had been attracted by everything that met his eye—every picture-book, the woodcuts of an old Bible, the carvings on the church pulpit—and scarcely was he engaged in the task than it seemed as if he had struck with a magician's rod against the closed-up springs of his life, and that his mind began to expand. Much courage and perseverance, and an unconquerable will, were needed for a man to become an artist on a solitary Friesland island, among a race who conceal in their costume every physical form, and where climate, habits and character, seem alike opposed to artist life. For years of his life Jakob had laboured with the energy of a mind faithful to its innermost yearnings, tormented with unsuccessful efforts, often hopeless and desponding; but he had also had moments of indescribable delight when 'the

wings of his power seemed to have grown, and he had felt that he had found his true vocation. The Fates had once helped him to a journey to Copenhagen, and here for the first time he had seen genuine works of art. A passionate joy had come over him. He had brought back with him plaster-of-Paris models and busts, on which he practised his skill and made further progress. From this period may be dated the misfortunes of his life—yet he reckoned his life alone from this time! The purchases he had made had thrown him into debt; his small domestic arrangements never righted themselves again; a ceaseless, restless, ardent longing, impelled him ever forwards, and his miserable vocation of schoolmaster, which daily demanded his mind, and which he must carry on if he wished to live, became his death. Often did he wrestle with the desire to throw up everything and run away—to study in Copenhagen—but his conscience and his heart held him in bonds. There was no one on the island who gave heed to him, or who would have had the taste for his paintings. The contradiction between what he was and what he felt impelled to be—the impossibility of shaking off his trammels and satisfying his desires—the consciousness of great powers struggling and grinding in a false direc-

tion—the discontent with that which he had produced in his art—a sense of disgust, a contempt indeed towards much that he had begun with delight—the over-excitement of his nature and the unceasing strain upon his nerves—wore him out. Probably Jakob had brought the seeds of consumption with him when he came into the world, for he had become a schoolmaster because he was not strong enough to go to sea. Nature had bestowed on him a sanguine temperament and finely-strung feelings, and it suited ill with his active aspiring imagination to be a schoolmaster on a Friesland island. He had, therefore, never filled his post with credit. The authorities, however, at that time concerned themselves little with national education, and for many years everything went on in its careless way. But, at the time at which our story begins, the clergyman was obliged to take notice of the negligence, for children who came to confirmation from Jakob's school could not read. It was said, moreover, that Jakob was always painting pictures, and that in fact he was fit for nothing else.

The gloomy month of November was now over ; December was somewhat brighter ; but on one of its days a letter arrived from the school committee, with the order that the teacher Jakob was to be



deposed from his office, and was to leave the school-house at Easter, when a new master was to arrive. Jakob must long ago have expected nothing else, and he was glad that the school-keeping had been immediately taken from him on account of his health, and that a substitute had been at once appointed, and yet the result of this decision lay heavy on his heart. Goneril, after calling to mind scornfully and derisively how she had once prophesied to her relatives all that was now coming to pass, took everything upon herself in her usual calm manner. When she saw Jakob inconsolable at the misfortune which he had brought upon her and her son, she laughed at him over the *good fortune* which he deplored. They should find a bit of bread somehow ! Her cousin plied between Wyk and Dagebühl, and the craft belonged to him ; she would hire herself to him, and he would find that she had strength for the work just as well as other people. Jakob wished that she should apply to the smith, but Goneril would not submit to the humiliation. She still possessed a set of buttons and a silver chain which had adorned the jacket of her bridal dress, and which had been her only dowry ; for Jan Ketel, her mother's husband, had only been master of a small schooner, and the home wants had ever been scantily supplied.

Her foster-father had broken his leg, and had thus early become unfit for service, and thus they lived on his former gains, and consumed what they possessed. The smith and Frau Göntje had become rich by marrying well. Goneril, with her poor schoolmaster, had neither wanted nor enjoyed much; for like the beast on the pasture-ground, the man who knows not the requirements of a higher sense of life, moves within a small circle of necessities and enjoyments. Frau Goneril went on foot to Wyk, the capital of the island, where a silversmith dwelt, and she returned home again with eight thalers as the price of her sold treasures. There were still six weeks to Christmas, and then some money from the legacy would be paid, and she reckoned with confidence that at Easter navigation would be open, and her plan of serving in the vessel would be practicable. Jakob, who could write so well, would find employment with the governor, who resided at Nibelum. She had left a specimen of his handwriting with the silversmith, who had promised to use his interest in her behalf. Goneril had reckoned the possibility of maintenance, and she thought not of more than daily bread. She felt herself, moreover, by no means humbled by the services at which her wishes

aimed. Her strange pride was only directed against her own family, with regard to whom she felt herself as Thorson's daughter, and behaved herself with independence and defiance.

The period from Christmas to Easter was passed in deep seclusion by the occupants of the school-house. The village children went the long way to the nearest school, for the substitute had not proved suitable, and did not remain. Goneril now avoided intercourse with all, and Jakob's doings had become so strange that the neighbours, in spite of the good-nature peculiar to the Friesland race, felt scarcely any pity or interest towards him. The school-house stood abandoned as if a ban had been passed over it, and Frau Goneril with her grave countenance scared away all who approached, as though no one belonged to the charmed circle of her existence. A rumour, moreover, soon spread abroad that Goneril's mother had allowed herself to be deluded by an evil spirit, and had given birth to a witch; that it was she who had bewitched Jakob, so that he had become consumptive and sickly like no one else of his race; that it was she who had mystified his senses, leading him into idle and thoughtless acts, keeping him from church and from pursuing his duties and office, as became an honest man and the father of

a family. In the boy Johannes also traces were perceived of the strange nature as well as features of his maternal side, and the boy lived between father and mother, divided in his inclinations and employments, hungering and thirsting but vigorous and healthy : a loved child, like all in the poor school-house, upheld and animated by his own spirit.

Jakob, however, had never lived so happily as since his deposition, in spite of the public disgrace attached to it. His health had, it is true, grown worse ; he coughed, and looked so emaciated, that all who saw him felt his end was not far off ; but his mind knew nothing of its old torment. Since the labour of teaching no longer exhausted him, since he could do whatever he chose, with no one to torment him and withdraw from him, he felt the creative impulse of his art more active than ever, and his imagination expanded.

It was not long after his dismissal, that he one day stretched the last piece of canvas he possessed, and pasted a sheet of paper on his drawing-board. For days he had wandered restlessly about, taking up his pencil and again laying it down, as though he feared not to begin aright. Suddenly, in passionate excitement, every power agitated within him, as if impelled to creation by some inward agency,

he drew on the paper the sketch of a figure which he intended to execute as large as life. He trembled lest he should be disturbed ; he listened almost in fear for any noise from without, which might again banish and expel the spirits which seemed to guide his hand at his task ! With indescribable satisfaction, some hours after, weary and still feeling the excitement in a sense of agreeable relaxation pervading every nerve, he laid aside his brush, thinking, as he descended the stairs, of the legacy of Aunt Tat, and whether it might not be possible to expend a few thalers in colours. In his mind he made a list of what he required, and purposed at a fitting moment to speak to Goneril on the subject. He thought with profound delight of the picture, the sketch for which he had just designed. It was the longing of his life—a dream which had often visited him in solitary hours, a form which occasionally had flitted before his mind like a life-like being, the execution of which now seemed possible to him. In a kind of lassitude, which, however, was not without a sense of bliss, he rested from the first day's work of his creation—then he went back to his task and persisted in it. He resolved that no one should see the picture, least of all Frau Goneril, lest she should lessen his delight in it by her

cold manner, and disturb the deep joy which it afforded him. But Johannes, his boy, he took with him when he meant to paint, and he gave him his shells and collection of sea-weeds, which were arranged after a learned botanical book, so that he might amuse himself with them and might like to remain ; and then Jakob worked, casting occasionally a glance of rapture at the beautiful boy, in the excitement of a nature elevated by creative passion.

The work advanced ; Jakob, however, daily spat blood, and had burning fever for several hours ; yet from his picture there gazed at him the blooming figure and head of a woman who smiled at him with a smile such as he had never known in reality, so that a feeling of inexpressible rapture thrilled through him.. He called the picture 'Eve in Paradise.' It might have faults enough, but it bore the stamp of genius. Whoever saw it, felt in it somewhat of the eternal might of mind. It was the striving of genius after the significance and ideal life of art. Jakob seemed to have completely identified himself with his picture of Eve. Working frequently in a cold room, badly fed and constantly shut out from intercourse, he had however declined so much in a few weeks, that he looked like a shadow. Goneril often gazed at him long

and sadly. She felt that he would die, yet she let him do as he would, for her lofty nature divined the workings of his deep and peculiar mind. She had grown more tender than anyone had ever seen her before. Many a time in the night she stood by Jakob's bed and listened to hear if he slept, and tears, such as she did not often shed, slowly forced themselves from her breast into her cold and clear eyes. Jakob was now frequently delirious at night, and though in pain was strangely happy. He would speak with his picture, and would raise himself in bed and call upon his beautiful Eve. His imagination was too powerful, and the world of dream and beauty into which it had borne him seemed to absorb his physical strength with higher demands. Soon, even in his waking hours, he went about like a dreamer, appearing only alive, self-conscious, and present, when working at his picture.

In this way the winter came to a close. It was on Good Friday, when the bells were ringing to church, that Jakob laid down his brush and said that his picture was finished; and even Goneril looked at it with reverence, although with a woman's pride she felt ashamed that he had painted a woman so unveiled. But she said nothing, for he lay in the bed against the wall, and coughed and

brought up so much blood, that she prepared to go to Nibelum to fetch a doctor. Johannes was to remain with his father, who, now that his picture was finished, looked at it no more, but liked to have the boy near him, and seemed to regard him alone with unspeakable tenderness.

Frau Goneril went the weary way—she could not be at home again before evening.

Ever since she had thought that Jakob would die, although her life with him had been so solitary, she felt as if something within her were being rent asunder. She went sadly and cast down. All that was impending over her rose fearfully before her mind. Directly after Easter they must leave the house. She thought of the removal to Wyk; she had nothing more to sell. She was now fetching the doctor—where was the money to come from? Thus she went, full of care; but the storm rose, and the sea roared against the embankment. It was like a reminder to herself that she should concentrate her faculties and be herself again, and she walked onwards with composure. But the doctor was not at home; his wife knew not in what village he was just then to be found, for he was making a circuit through the island. On Easter Sunday he would be at the smith's house at Oevenom.



With the fatalistic calmness peculiar to her, Goneril went home, and finding Johannes fast asleep, and Jakob slumbering with the exhaustion that succeeds fever, she thought that he might be better without the doctor, if he *were* to be better. But day and night passed, and Jakob's malady had made rapid progress; his diseased lung was completely gone, and he lay in the uneasiness and pain of death. It was as if the mental strain, so long as he was occupied with his picture, had kept him alive. Now that the flame of inspiration no longer needed him, the oil was rapidly consuming like some worthless residue. Jakob was now, however, lying in calm consciousness; the overwhelming life of imagination, the true strength of his nature seemed extinguished; gently, and almost with a smile of indifference, he was leaving life, and talking, after the manner of the consumptive, whenever he felt himself relieved, of his speedy recovery. The night of Easter Sunday witnessed, however, again a fearful struggle and wrestling, as if the life within him were resisting the already outstretched hand of death. Like a dream full of delirious fancy, the picture of Eve pervaded every vision, every word which the dying man uttered. From Goneril he turned aside with a strange smile.

‘See there,’ he said, pointing to the picture. ‘I have sought her and loved her, and I must follow her. She is drawing me after her into eternity; through heaven and hell I must follow her till I find her.’

When the paroxysm was over, he was again gentle and kind to Goneril, and held out his hand to her; but her heart bled, and a bitter pain thrilled through her, orphaned as she now was in her innermost soul, and she sank down sorrowfully as among the wreck of everything.

The boy Johannes looked at his father and mother gloomily, penetratingly; then he sat down in a dark corner of the room, and Goneril hung Jakob’s coat over his favourite picture.

‘Run, Johannes!’ said Goneril towards noon; for dread overcame her as an attack of hæmorrhage came on, to relieve the sick man from the struggles and agony of the last hour. ‘The doctor is at Uncle Jan’s; we will give him what we have.’

‘The doctor shall have the Eve,’ said Johannes, gloomily, as he turned away from the picture.

‘Uncle shall put the horses to; in two hours I shall be back again.’ The boy ran away. Frau Goneril looked after him until he was out of sight on the distant level of the fields, just green with

the early sprouts ; then she seated herself on the floor behind the sick man's bed, that he might not see her, and her tears flowed slowly and bitterly on her lap like molten brass.

Thus she sat till towards evening, for Jakob lay still, deeply breathing as if in sleep ; and when she looked at him, it seemed to her that he was dreaming pleasant dreams, for he lay quiet as a child.

## CHAPTER III.

## LIFE AND DEATH.

‘LET us have some singing ; who knows a song?’ Thus sounded the joyous voice of the master smith, amid his guests, in all the merriment of the good-humoured host.

It was a pleasant party which, for mirth and Easter rejoicing, had assembled in the small room. After a pause of eight years Frau Keyke had given her family once more the enjoyment of a christening feast. This was an event which, among people of their kind, was to be celebrated with decency and feeling, as well as with some display. Jan and his wife had therefore invited all their relations, and all those whom they chose to honour among their acquaintances. Goneril and her husband had not been passed over, either from forgetfulness or from the arrogance of their wealthy relatives.

‘We need not concern ourselves about them, as they wish to have nothing to do with us,’ said the smith ; and in his homely way he had neither

been particularly hostile nor disposed towards his sister. Frau Keyke, however, felt it a disgrace that her husband's brother-in-law should have been dismissed from office, and that his sister was an illegitimate child.

What a lively animated life had been going on for three days past at the smithy! What had not been spent there! What fat hams of their own feeding, what good meat in the batter-pudding! How all the furniture had been cleared away! How everything had been scoured and cleaned! With what devotion and solemn dignity, placing himself in such works and arrangements as second to his wife, had the honest smith gone about the house! Since the last christening his prosperity had increased; he had purchased a barley-field and a marsh-meadow; his custom had improved; people brought him work even from Wyk! Solemn on Easter Sunday was the procession to church. The sponsor, in grand attire, carried the infant, draped in miniature in the costume of the country. The honest smith loved to hear God's word read as intelligently as by the Herr Pastor, and all drove festively in befitting grandeur back to Oevenom in the gaily-painted waggon with the sleek well-curried horses!

It was a festival indeed in the old smithy!

The guests had come to dinner, only every person had to bring knife and fork and spoon, and a small present in gold ; otherwise the host provided everything.

Frau Keyke joined the company after the dishes had been well served and consumed, and she had given her babe its due ; and she placed the heavy wooden stand, in which the infant slept perspiring under a heap of pillows, by her side and rocked it with her foot. The atmosphere of the little room was heavy and oppressive owing to the numbers in it, the dinner, and the close packing of human beings. They sat as if nailed to the benches, taking the coffee and kuchen which were carried round after the meal ; and when the company, like the Homeric heroes, had sufficiently enjoyed, for the second time, the necessity of eating and drinking, their spirits began to revive, and something akin to merriment appeared in the women. But the men sat together and listened to the remarks of the more cultivated guests ; for the doctor and the pastor were there, and an old school-master who had retired, and who now, with the inclination to contemplativeness peculiar to the Frieslander, occupied himself with placing philosophical problems in their true light by the aid of sound common sense. The old man sat like the

Nestor of the assembly, and had talked himself into a state of agreeable emotion, when Jan invited the guests to sing something, as we have already heard.

An almost comical effect is produced by the pathos with which people express themselves in High German when they are at home in an old language or in a popular dialect. High German then appears like some noble relative, who is appealed to on every solemn act of life, or whose voice is heard in books or in halls of justice; he exercises his tyranny over the child in the school, and on every important occasion he asserts himself with his tedious conversation. It is not pleasant nor easy to be obliged to meddle with the great lord; but the Frieslander neither sings nor writes songs, and he is therefore compelled to turn to the *German* song-book, whenever he wishes to refresh his heart with melody.

How hard rang every syllable, how stiff was the sound of the rhyme. Like a child repeating its task, the singer gave to the best of his ability the song 'Rejoice in life.' But all sat with dignified mien listening to the joyous melody, and joined conscientiously in the chorus, without missing a word. Many had brought the song-book with them, for no one in such good society would

have committed a breach of decorum by want of memory.

It was raining a little out of doors ; a large soft spring cloud was gently dispersing its blessing on the corn-field germinating in the warm sunshine ; and Jan, when he looked through the small panes of glass, as he often did, felt himself agreeably affected by the feeling of emotion and gratitude which had been excited during the morning drive from church ; for his eye ever fell upon something that belonged to him, and what work was there not in store for him when the festival was over !

The last verse of ' Rejoice in life ' was in full flow, when a disturbance occurred in the company. It was Johannes, Frau Goneril's son, who opened the door and bid them good evening. Then he went up to the doctor, having rapidly surveyed the company, and said, with a voice which was low from inward excitement, ' The doctor must come with me ; father is dying.'

Jan, the smith, had started up. ' You will let us drive, uncle,' said the boy ; ' I have run all the way ; but that takes too long.'

' How you look, youngster,' said the uncle, drawing the boy to the window, for it was almost dark in the room.

' There is no time to lose,' said Johannes ; ' my



father is dying ;' and the face of the boy, which was deadly pale, wore an agitated expression.

Without more ado, Jan had gone out, and had ordered the boy, who helped him in his increased business at the forge, to put the horses to. The guests still remained in their places, and Frau Göntje stood by Johannes, persuading him to take something. But the boy took nothing ; he did not even answer, but looked out at the shed where the vehicle was being brought out. He gave no reply to all the questions put to him ; he answered the doctor alone, and told him that his father was bringing up blood, and that his mother thought he would die.

Frau Keyke glanced sideways at the boy, and told Jan he might have let the doctor ride over ; it was not likely to be so bad ; surely he would not go with him just to-day ? The poor horses, which had been once out already ! Must they really drive over just because the boy had no fancy for going on foot ?

The smith, however, much as he generally stood under the direction of his wife, was not to be influenced by her on this occasion ; and Johannes looked at her as if he did not hear her, or her words were indifferent to him. The boy, though he had run the whole way, seemed neither weary

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nor exhausted. He had the grave compressed lips of his mother, and her bearing ; but his eye was softer, and was only at times clear and keen as hers. He waited while preparations were being made for departure, asking and answering nothing ; and when Frau Keyke gave him a piece of cake, he put it in his pocket without looking at it, or troubling himself further about the company, who stared at him with astonishment.

The waggon drove up, and Johannes sprang up by the side of the forge lad ; the old schoolmaster, who had heard the tidings of the illness of his former colleague with a reproachful conscience because he had never concerned himself about him on his dismissal and misfortune, climbed up also into the waggon, sitting cramped up between the doctor and the broad smith on the back seat. It never occurred to anyone to disturb the boy, who gazed ever calmly before him, except when he urged the lad to drive more quickly, and this he did more frequently the nearer they came to the village, where his mother was waiting. It was quite dark when they stopped at the school-house.

Frau Goneril came down the stairs and opened the door. She held the lamp in one hand, keeping the other before it that the draught might not

extinguish the light. She looked like a stone statue, she was so white and stiff. She paid no regard to the others, but turned to her boy.

‘Thy father still sleeps,’ she said, in a toneless voice. ‘He fell asleep when thou went; he has not wakened since.’

‘Mother!’ cried Johannes.

The woman drew him up the stairs to his father’s bedside. Jakob’s hand was hanging outside the counterpane. Johannes felt it cold and stiff.

‘He is dead,’ said the doctor, and Johannes fell upon his father and wept aloud. Goneril stood erect, but her face was as pale as that of the dead. She felt as if a nail were being bored through her forehead, and her heart was standing still. But nature had pity on her agony, and bursting into tears, the power of life revived in her. She was gentle as her brother had never known her, when she came to herself again after the outburst of woe; but she rejected all help, all consolation. On the day of the funeral, the fourth day, she would see them all, until then she must be *alone*. She told her brother that he must pay over to her the whole legacy of aunt Tat; it was indifferent to her whether this had already occurred to him or no. She required the money, and, as he was

rich, he would be able to give her in advance what was to fall to her some day. The smith, who had never known his sister humbly imploring a favour and needing help, promised her what she desired, and looked round the poor house on the pictures and matters among which the corpse lay. Jakob's coat still hung over the undraped form of Eve.

With different feelings to those when he had driven to church in the morning, the smith drove home and told the relations, some of whom had not yet left, how miserably the brother-in-law had died, and how the unhappiness of poor Goneril had made her quite gentle, and had broken down her strong will.

‘What do you think?’ he said to his wife; ‘we could find room, could not we, for her and her son here in the house?’

‘In the chamber on the ground floor,’ said Frau Keyke. ‘We should then not require a servant. I shall be glad if Goneril is repentant and altered.’

And the honest smith looked with emotion at his wife, and went to the chest in which he kept his ready money, and took from it forty dollars, which was about the sum that Goneril was to receive from the legacy.

‘She is in debt in every hole and corner,’ he

said, 'and we are not to know it, and the funeral in addition. Poor Goneril, that she should have had a husband with all sorts of whims in his head. She could not grow reasonable in such a state of things.'

The smith was wrong. Goneril was one of the women who, in certain matters, *never* grow reasonable under any circumstances.

## CHAPTER IV.

A NEW HOME<sup>1</sup>

THE Halligen are a group of islands lying at the southwest of Föhr, the soil of which consists of rich alluvial clay, rising only a few feet above the ordinary level of the sea. The houses are built on wharves—mounds of earth about twelve or fourteen feet high—but without either embankments or bulwarks. The inhabitants are exposed to all the dangers of inundation. The soil bears no corn nor grass, and not a flower appears. Gulls scream over the islands, on which no other bird builds its nest. But on these alluvial lands—in the midst of the sea, in these dreary spots—a sturdy, sea-loving race has settled. On the largest of the Halligen stands a village with its church. It is said on the continent that the clergyman is at once clerk and grave-digger, and even enacts the ferryman of the island. It is a poor position; but many a conscientious man has stood at the perilous post, and has invested it and himself with honour.

The man who, at the time of which we are writing, held the office of clergyman at the Hallig, would have deserved, as regards the qualities of the heart and rectitude of character, the best parish in the land; yet he had esteemed himself happy when, after twenty-five years of waiting, want, and anxiety, he had acquired a maintenance and had a home to which he could bring his bride, the silver anniversary of whose betrothal with him he had already celebrated. The candidate had never had much gift and talent for preaching; the couple had never possessed much imagination and power; they had always cherished the most modest expectations; they were accustomed to want and care. Nevertheless the hard life on the Halligen had so weakened the young Frau Pastorin that she died a year after their marriage. The widower needed some one to attend to his house-keeping, and as he was weakly he required vigorous assistance. Frau Goneril had heard of the death of the Pastorin and of the widower's anxiety, and had crossed over to the island and had arranged all matters with him. With indifferent haste she proceeded to sell her household furniture. Various things she gave away to people who might have requested them of her. To the old schoolmaster who had visited them on the day of

her husband's death, she gave his collection of plants and shells ; but she packed up his pictures, and even his books she took with her ; and the painting of Eve, which she had kept carefully concealed, she rolled round a piece of wood and sewed it up in a pure white linen cloth, the same as she had placed over her husband, when he lay as a corpse in the open coffin. Bror Jan had been wrong when he imagined that she wanted the forty dollars to pay debts and to appear to people as a methodical housewife. Goneril looked at him almost contemptuously when he said so. She had arranged a funeral for her deceased husband as if he had been governor of Nibelum, and she had ordered a memorial slab to mark his resting-place. She only regretted that he must sleep in the highlands of the interior. She would so gladly have chosen him a resting-place in the vicinity of the sea, beneath one of the mounds which antiquarians regard as the graves of giants. But this could not be effected on account of the magistrates. And Goneril purchased handsome mourning attire for herself and her boy ; and proud and stately she looked in her deep black, greeting with composure and dignity all who approached her as she followed her husband to his last resting-place. Johannes also stood tearless at the clergyman's



discourse, and his mother shuddered but did not break down, as the earth rolled upon the coffin and closed it in for evermore in darkness. Goneril's demeanour—her proud lofty nature, her arrogant attire at the funeral, the splendour, unbefitting her poverty, and indeed the richness of the repast which she had prepared for his relatives—startled everyone. Many were of opinion that she was not right in her head, and that she must be watched. When, however, she soon afterwards sold everything, even the good mourning attire, and left the house where nothing more belonged to her, poor and badly clothed; when they learned that she was going into service at the Hallig, they let her depart; and Goneril and her boy were soon only now and then a subject of conversation among the relatives.

She, however, rejoiced in the solitude and in the sea which dashed against the Hallig levels, amid the ceaseless roar of the breakers. It was a poor house in which the pastor lived, and Goneril did everything, and took care of him and his possessions. The proud manner, which had ever been known and blamed in her, was not laid aside. She was like the king's daughter in ancient story, whom the destiny of war has made a slave under foreign conquerors, and who does not weep over her home

and the pride of her birth, but *grandly dispenses* with them, though *never* forgetful of them. In her poor room she had placed, besides the few articles of clothing belonging to her and Johannes, her husband's pictures and his books, about twenty volumes, which seemed to her a great store. The painting of Eve stood behind the bed in which she slept, sewed up in the cloth; and often as she looked at it, the suffering of the time in which Jacob painted it, his death, and all that the picture had brought upon her, thrilled through her mind and pierced her heart as with a sword; but she let it be when it did not press her too sorely. It gratified her that under her hand the pastor's sheep and pigs, and a few fowls, flourished.

She had been two years on the Hallig, and the sea, for a wonder, had done no harm to the land. The drifts of sand here and there destroyed the grazing land, but the potato and corn-fields behind the pastor's house produced excellent crops. Goneril's favourite employment, however, and her surest gain, was the ferry-boat to Föhr, which she managed, indifferent to weather. The traffic with Föhr, which is the continent to the Halligen islands, and the intercourse between the small islands, was not inconsiderable. In the long winter season, when every-

thing lay dead, when the Halligen, surrounded by the grey roaring expanse of sea, lie desolate like some tearful grave, the home of constant storm and bitter wind; when the inhabitants, abandoned to the fury of the violent element, vegetate resignedly over the precipice of danger unceasingly hovering in their dwellings, she knitted stockings, woollen jackets and gloves, for which she found a ready sale at Wyk. The pastor knitted nets for fishing, and patched up his sermon for Sunday. Johannes read aloud out of the Bible or out of other books, and Goneril looked at him with pride and joy. The pastor instructed him so that he learned to write. This, and eating and drinking, were all the wages he could give his housekeeper, and Goneril brought him back whatever she gained as passage-money. It never occurred to her, in the simple circumstances in which she lived, to save anything for herself or Johannes, or to desire anything as her own. And Johannes grew up strong and vigorous in the solitude. He rowed with his mother, he swam as if the water were his native element, and his frame was strong as steel. He was silent by nature, full of passionate devotion towards his mother; otherwise he was indifferent, as though no one concerned him. Ever since he could read he was constantly

occupied with his books ; but everything lay within him, as if it sought no sympathy from others and was locked within his own breast. For a lad in his circumstances, he had, however, an unusually favourable opportunity for learning. All who learn to read possess a key to the world of mind, and it lies with each one how far he chooses to go, how far and how high the power within him impels and upholds him !

It was a strange life with the mother and her son. They could be hours together and not speak a word ; they had, moreover, nothing to say ; but it was as if nevertheless they were communicating freely, and they could not do without each other. Goneril's heart rose when she was in the open air. Late in the fine summer evenings, in the profound silence of the great solitude around her, she would often sit quite silently on the shore, on the dry sand. Johannes would lie on his back at a little distance from her, looking up into the sky ; and the movement of the constellations and the soft grand thing would thrill through the minds of both. How softly the waves rippled on the shore—how still and breathless lay the sea which could sometimes rage so furiously, as if uplifted from its everlasting bed and hurled towards heaven with passionate agony ! Johannes, like his mother,

listened to the storm without alarm; he was watchful like her, at the first approach of danger, to concentrate his powers and to save whatever any held in esteem—property, whether large or small—and life.

The long winter passed away in colourless desolation to the occupants of the pastor's house. But like all who have grown up in solitude, with unaroused desires, the tedium was not felt as a misfortune. Night followed day without their having required any particular excitement in order to produce weariness. Johannes, however, began to comprehend that a world lay beyond the seclusion of Halligen and the deathlike desolation of the sea. He now began to make inquiries of his mother and the pastor; and Frau Goneril placed the Eve painting in the pastor's closet, for he desired to see it, and she had a feeling as if she must keep it to herself as a destiny which had caused his father's death. All the more, however, she told him of Adam Thorson, his grandfather, who dwelt in Iceland; and her heart exulted, her bosom heaved, and a proud joy filled her breast, her nostrils dilating like those of some noble horse at the sound of the trumpet, when Johannes read aloud the books of legends which he found amongst his father's treasures. The pastor gave

her their purport in the Friesland dialect, as well as his feeble imagination would allow him to do, when she could not follow the German. They read of the voyage of the Nibelungen, they read the Frithiofs Saga, and other legends of giants and heroes. Goneril listened, and was silent. Then she would begin to relate it herself, as though she had been present. It was not the deeds and adventures of the gods, not fairy tales and marvels, which excited her interest; but it was deeds of *heroism* that attracted her; the power of will, the pride of men who were not to be bound down, whom the gods with their utmost hate could not bring to disgrace, but who maintained the right and preserved their free soul. To Goneril now the sea was peopled, and the voice of the storm, which she always loved, the fleeting clouds which she had often watched, acquired meaning and form. Adam Thorson, her father, who dwelt in Iceland, was Odin, who passes through the sea and sends forth heroes to conquer the earth. If the smith Jan had known the misty fancies floating through the woman's brain, as though northern poetry had a living form in her, he would not have allowed himself to be dissuaded from the impression that his sister Goneril was crazed.

The winter of 18— had been profitable to all

except the poor pastor, who could not move from his arm-chair for sickness and weakness. Johannes, however, had learned much, and Goneril had lived much in her own way. Both had often talked of Thorson, and Johannes knew already where Iceland was to be found on the map, for the pastor had a couple of maps belonging to his earlier life, when he had instructed pupils in geography.

Frau Goneril looked with calm confidence at her son, on whose countenance the seriousness of life had early begun to stamp itself. It grieved her that he must soon leave her, for Johannes wished to go to sea, like all the other youths on the Halligen. She knew no better career for him. Her experience of pastors and school-masters were but sickly specimens, and she imagined that only weakly men, who were not fit for the sea, were employed in these offices; and her Johannes was strong, and ought to have the best of callings! Many a time, when her keen eye saw a vessel in the distant horizon with the white sails spread, far between Föhr and the Halligen—there is no navigable water for large vessels—she saw in fancy her Johannes on it, landing at Iceland, and Thorson and the heroes of the Sagas coming towards him and bidding him

welcome! Johannes was in his thirteenth year, and Goneril turned it over in her mind that she would go to her brother-in-law, Ocke Hinrich, and ask him to take the boy with him to Hamburg. For although she did not set much value on the captain, he commanded the largest vessel of all the seamen of Föhr, and it seemed to her right that Johannes should serve on the vessel most worthy of him. With all her arrogance Goneril was full of trust, for in her mind there stood a star over the head of her son.



## CHAPTER V.

## SWEPT AWAY.

It had been a short winter. The ice-floes had been small, and Frau Goneril could undertake her voyage to Westerland early in March. She had not seen the inland country since the death of her husband ; and an oppressive feeling, a dull sense of fear and care, passed through her breast, as she took the road across the island with her son. It was a heavy road, increasingly heavy to her. Her knees tottered, and her legs grew weary, when she saw the village lying apart, and the gable of the school-house gleaming in the distance, with its stripes of green and gay colouring, where she had lived with Jakob, and where he had died. Johannes also turned his head in the direction, but mother and son said nothing, but walked on quickly with restless steps, as though grief impelled them, and down the cheeks of both the tears were running silently and bitterly.

Some surprise was excited in Westerland by the unexpected visit, and Frau Göntje inclined

her friendly face towards the stern Goneril and kissed her, for it pained her to see that her sister had grown older and thinner from the heavy work and the hard life at the Hallig, and she told her so, and regretted that she would not have it improved. The captain was well inclined to take Johannes with him, so that he might begin his apprenticeship at sea, which he really ought to have begun earlier.

Goneril was induced to stay over night, and a splendid repast was served in her honour. She could not refuse when her bother-in-law begged her to allow Johannes to remain a couple of days that the needful sailor's garb might be procured for him; and she agreed to fetch him from Wyk, so that he might remain with her till he started for the voyage. The mother looked at Johannes; he neither said No nor Yes, but let them do with him whatever she and his uncle wished. The captain and Frau Göntje took Goneril to Wyk, where her craft lay; Johannes sat at his mother's side, but said not a word. They drove to the smith's at Oevenom, for Göntje insisted on Goneril's showing herself to her relations there; and, accompanied by good wishes, she got into her boat at Wyk and hoisted the sail, for the wind was suitable. The rest stood on the shore, and

walked gravely away when the boat was lost to view in the distance.

Johannes had given his hand to his mother, and had quietly said 'Na adjes;' and he took his place by the captain's side in the large waggon. The old man was pleased that the boy did not cry nor show weakness, as might have been expected by a home-child. Johannes, however, had no appetite for his food that evening, and blushed crimson when one of his cousins, who was as old as he was, asked him whether he was glad to come away from poor Hallig?

The second day, when it was settled that his mother should come to Wyk, Johannes woke, while it was still night, and got up as soon as he heard any movement in the house, and was ready long before it was time to set out. His uncle intended to buy him all that was necessary at Wyk, so that the fatherless boy might have plenty of warm clothing. Johannes was scantily attired; and ready as the captain and Frau Göntje were to make allowances for Goneril, they could not but blame her for her want of industry, and for not having laid up somewhat for her only child.

It was a grey, cloudy morning, and the air was troubled; the gulls screamed and flew far into the land. The mariner, experienced in the weather,

looked out and prophesied a violent storm before mid-day ; and he urged speed, so that Goneril should be at home again in good time. But before they reached Wyk, the storm had burst ; clouds of sand were blown by a whirlwind in the faces of the travellers as they passed over the highlands ; and so violent was the sudden outburst of tempest, that it was impossible for the horses to proceed. They were, however, nearer to Wyk than to their own home, and they therefore drove on. The sea roared in the distance, and a fearful hurricane seemed approaching nearer and nearer as though it would dash the island to pieces beneath the weight of the surging waters.

‘Thy mother will not have left Hallig,’ said Ocke Hinrich, when they had at length reached Wyk after a laborious drive ; and he borrowed a telescope and gazed out over the sea.

‘No,’ said Johannes, ‘the mother knows the signs of the weather.’ Suddenly the boy became deadly pale, and even the old captain changed colour.

‘A heavy sea is coming up,’ said Johannes ; ‘it is springtide to-day—they have often told of it at Hallig. If this wind continues, they may all be laid under water. I must cross!’—

Ocke Hinrich had not heard the boy ; he had

joined a group of men who had run out in front of the market-place to look over the sea from the other side. The storm had grown so violent in the short time that everything beneath the vault of heaven seemed to howl and roar; the mass of water was so great, and it grew and increased so mightily, the sea surged so high and beat so ragingly against the island embankment, that every one felt alarmed for the security of life and property. It was already said that at one point the embankment was broken through. The one hope was that the storm, which had come up with the tide in such sudden fury, would again abate with the ebb; but experienced people shook their heads at the consolation.

‘Let everyone go home, and let each one care for his own,’ said Ocke Hinrich; ‘let everyone see if there is any damaged place in this embankment; if the sea breaks through, we shall be under water up to the highlands. Don’t stand about men! Take precautions! Johannes, come; where are you?’

The boy was not to be found. He was at the harbour of Wyk. Without enquiring to whom the vessel belonged, he was unfastening a boat.

‘The lad is from Hallig; he wants to go to his mother,’ said one.

‘Art thou crazed?’ said Ocke Hinrich, striking the rudder from the boy’s hand. ‘No one can go upon that sea!’ The owners of the boat also protested against it.

‘I must, indeed,’ said Johannes, with an expression of countenance that startled everyone, and which was almost awful in his agony. ‘The Hallig will soon be under water; the pilot here said so! My mother is there. You know it!’

The anxiety of the boy touched many. They let him attempt it; it would be better for him to see himself that it was impossible.

‘Give it up,’ said Ocke Hinrich; ‘come with me!’ But Johannes came not; his uncle left him as he desired, and drove home.

And Johannes sat down, or stood and looked out in the direction of Hallig, and watched to see if the flood increased, and whither the wind drove it. Thus he sat all day, thus he sat till evening, when the moon rose, and a pale gleam occasionally broke through the clouds, and flitted with awful brightness across the sea.

All, however, were the whole night through in the streets, running hither and thither in fear and disorder. As yet there was no broken embankment at Föhr to complain of; but the storm did not abate, and no one knew what the next

moment might bring. Whenever the Halligen were mentioned, it was always as of some great calamity.

Towards midnight Johannes was taken by a compassionate sailor to his house, and there he wept so bitterly and loudly that it seemed as if he would weep himself to death, and would sink in his terrible woe. He had no longer any hope. Young as he was, he was feeling death, the horror of annihilation, the solitude in the universe, the nothingness and powerlessness of man battling with the elements!

When he came to himself again after the outburst of agony, which had shattered his frame and had shaken it to its very fibres, as violently as the storm without was threatening to tear earth and ocean from their fixed eternal bounds, he seemed exhausted, and towards morning they found him fast asleep.

But the storm had not abated. When it was day, Johannes was standing where he had stood yesterday. Nothing was to be seen of the Hallig, but a *black* point rose above the waters—it was the church tower! To this his hope clung; the church stood high! His mother was saved! The roar and tumult continued unceasingly till evening; the flood rose higher and higher. All might

already have perished on the Hallig, and been swallowed up in that terrible grave of waters.

On the following day nature was at peace again. As usual after such fearful storms, the sky was clear; the sea sobbed convulsively, as with the throes of past agony; but it was growing smooth again, and seemed inclined to retire to its accustomed bounds; and the sun stood bright and glorious in the heavens, shining—as with cold indifference—on the ravages committed, on the ruined works, and buildings, on happiness shattered, and on human ties sundered and human joys destroyed, as though it were all nothing more to its great eternal eye than the perishing of an ant-hill to the eye of man, when with indifference he crushes it with his foot.

Only a few houses and the church remained standing on the Hallig where Frau Goneril lived; in the small Halligen everything had been swept away. Wharves were destroyed, stables carried away, dwellings in ruins, fields and pasture-lands inundated. Men and cattle had perished in the fearful calamity. The old pastor, who lay weak and sickly, had been as if paralyzed with alarm. Many people had found an asylum in the church, which stood on high ground. Goneril—strong and vigorous, knowing her son safe at Föhr—had



saved and helped as far as she could. *She* felt no alarm or dread; the storm and the sea had never yet awakened her fears. Like some favourite of the gods, whose devoted head is struck by the lightning flash, and whom the Thunderer carries home in fierce embrace, she delighted in the unfettering of the elements. It was to her as if she heard a voice calling to her by name: 'Go on! Yonder! Save! Help those who are groaning in the dust, who cannot rise to the joy, the eternal joy of existence, in the destruction, which even now throughout the universe is proclaiming its song of triumph with a thousand voices!' She was calm and beautiful, but full of elevated excitement. She had helped to carry the schoolmaster into the church when the water was advancing towards the pastor's house, and again she went back to fetch the picture of Eve. Then she ventured once again forth, and brought back in safety a child whom the mother had forgotten in her fear. Weary and breathless she stood for a moment, looking across to Föhr, where was her boy, and thinking: 'To-morrow, or the day after, I will fetch him.'

But before the morrow and the day after came, Goneril lay among the other corpses whom the sea had swallowed up in its everlasting depths.

In a moment of general confusion, when all had run together, and the wail had sounded in her ear, and had torn her again from the safe precincts of the church, she had perished in the raging flood. How was it? She could herself have scarcely said, had she had to relate the story. Enough. When all had become quiet again, and each looked after his loss, Goneril was among those who had found a grave in the sea; and Johannes, who crossed over with the first boat which brought help and food to the shipwrecked inhabitants of the deluged islands, had to learn the terrible story; and he thought that God had had no mercy upon him, because He had permitted that he should go to Föhr when his mother was to die, and his spirit rose angrily with the question *wherefore?* against that Spirit of which he had learned that He governs lovingly the destinies of men.

He crossed, however, back again to his uncle at Föhr. The pastor gave him the picture of Eve which his mother had saved; the rest of her possessions in the pastor's house had been carried away by the waves. Johannes left the picture in the cloth in which his mother had sewn it, and gave it to Frau Göntje to keep for him. She placed it away among her treasures as a remem-

brance of her sister ; but she, too, feared to take off the cloth and look at the picture, for Johannes had told her that his mother had never permitted it.

Then he went to sea with his uncle Ocke Hinrich.

*BOOK THE SECOND.*

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CHAPTER I.

## THE MEETING.

It was some years previous to the great fire in the old town of Hamburg. The city still retained somewhat of its rich citizen character, and with a kind of respectable arrogance it sat enthroned on the decayed basis of its mediæval institutions, which it had indeed outgrown in its commerce, navigation, and great intercourse with the world. The town-hall, with its stone statues of the emperors, and the old exchange, were still standing. Citizens and senate, train-bands and people, maintained a common unity and dignity. The Hamburger regarded himself as a freeman, privileged by fortune and merit, and the spirit of the new age ventured only with uncertain touch to shake the old commonwealth.

It was at that time one of the most interesting points of Hamburg, that the city exhibited such various and dissimilar physiognomies in the extent

of its fortifications, formed as they were into promenades within the gates, which were closed at evening. Smart and luxurious, and splendidly adorned in its modern parts, it possessed, again, streets which look mediæval-like in their gloom, soberness, and state, with tall gabled houses and high-storied granaries along the canals, where the heavy cranes stood, and beautiful lime-trees afforded coolness in the summer days. Gloomy enough were the streets in the low neighbourhood of the water-gate, where the great commercial city had its commencement. Waggoners from the country, and sailors from the Elbe boats, gave this part of the city the character of a provincial town. Restlessly active, on the other hand, with their small crowded traffic, looked the streets of the higher new town, from whence the former Ghetto branched off, the inhabitants of which had, however, long enjoyed the rights of citizens. The great fire, which swept away everything in Hamburg, opened the narrow streets and changed the entire aspect of the town. Anyone loving the old town must confess that this renewal made it more splend and important. The old Jungfern path was beautiful, with its avenue of old trees; but at the present day, the walk, bordered by fine houses, is magnificently prolonged round the broad

basin of the Alster. The stranger, spending a summer evening there, loves to preserve the remembrance of the vast circle of lamps mirrored in the water, of the music sounding from the lighted pavilions, while walkers pass to and fro ; of the boats with variegated lanterns gliding on the water ; and when he casts a glance at the harbour and the Elbe, the high-road of the commercial world, he feels no regret that the old log-house is no longer standing and the wood-house is demolished. Anyone who has seen the harbour of Hamburg will not forget the view in the far distance which is here opened to him, for everything here is activity and busy life. From the masts of vessels float the flags of every nation navigating the sea ; boats and craft of the most different style and form, laden with goods, men, and wares, pass to and fro along the canals ; everywhere active hands are moving and working ; and from the vessels may be heard the strangely monotonous sing-song of the sailors as they draw up bales and chests and cargo, thus keeping time to the movement of many hands. The harbour is splendid at mid-day, when the sun lights up every object, and the white sails, hung out to dry, gleam in the brilliant light. The quays and wharves are a continuation of the harbour.

Everything here is connected with ships and maritime life. Sailors of various nations mingle together, and the smell of tar obtrudes itself constantly. Fashion and elegance are rarely to be met with in this plebeian quarter of the town; but trade and commerce here appear in force, bringing together from every part of the globe whatever prolongs their ephemeral existence. It would occupy much time and space were we to relate what the great commercial city then was, and what it has since become. Each large city is a study in itself, for none is like another, though to the spectator who sees superficially the same things seem alone to display themselves.

It was in the early part of the century that a young man took up his abode in the Lower Street, in a small crazy house, before the door of which stood a lime-tree which spread out its meagre branches before the windows of the first floor. He was tall, somewhat awkward in his appearance; his noble features had a serious and gloomy expression; he had clear blue eyes, and an abundance of rough fair hair. Silently he proceeded up the stairs, behind the two old damsels who showed him the way to the gable room. He had on his back an old box, covered with sealskin, which he had himself carried

through the streets. The room was dark, with a northern aspect; it was cold even in the still warm September days, and a large Dutch-tile stove promised little warmth to one who had to be sparing with his firing in winter. The young man paid little regard to all this, but told his hostess he was satisfied, and proceeded to unpack a chest of books which had arrived before him; they were Greek and Latin classics, old northern poems and works on philology, obsolete books on natural subjects and history, besides writings of the mystics and the fathers of the church. He placed his books in a closet against the wall; his papers and documents were arranged in a chest of drawers; and his clothes—some shirts and pocket-handkerchiefs—his knitted green woollen gloves, and all else that belonged to his toilet, he laid on a stool at the foot of his bed, covered them over with a cloth, and fancied he had assigned to everything its fitting place.

The possessor of this magnificent property had been placed at the examination of the morning in the third class of the Johanneum, where he, a man of eighteen, was to take his seat among boys. His knowledge was of a low order, and he did not know enough Latin.

It was Johannes, whom we left at the death of



his mother six years before, whom we now meet with again at Hamburg. A strange working of destiny had brought him hither. To himself it seemed almost like a dream when he found himself alone on this first evening in the great city, and thought over everything. It came over him with such a rush of recollection, that he was obliged to force himself to complete the childish tasks which had been assigned him. Suddenly he paused, and let the pen fall from his hand—it seemed to him as if he had already wandered through a world and lost it. He opened the window, and a few stars shone out of the patch of sky which was visible between the houses. The sight touched him with a peculiar feeling; he thought of his father, of his mother, of that one other, who had been latterly all in all to him. What a world lay before him! What a life! What a glorious star-enlightened earth! What beings there were in it! His heart expanded with admiration and enthusiasm. A great joy came over him—wherefore he scarcely knew himself. But those three had taken him in their midst; in their solemn and noble company he was knocking at the gate of life, and he rejoiced in his own youthful, unpolluted, faithful soul.

It was, moreover, by good fortune and by a strange combination of circumstances, that he had advanced so far. The boy had left his mother's corpse, and had gone to sea; he had been destined to be a sailor, and he had already made two voyages as a cabin-boy. He knew nothing else than that he must endure the misery under which the sailor boy—the mark of every rudeness—is steeled into a man and a future comrade. His lot was better than that of many, for he was with his uncle; and on the vessel which the latter commanded there were chiefly Föhringers, who for the most part are humane, moderate, and prudent in speech and drink; but the boy was not glad and light-hearted. In Hamburg, when the vessel was laden and freighted, he had not landed; his uncle had not permitted that a boy of his age should rove about among sailors. Obedience to all on board, the renunciation of his own will, was an inviolable necessity. The boy had silently yielded to everything, but a kind of despondency came over him, and it increased day by day. It did not escape his uncle's eye that he ate little and spoke still less; the latter was, indeed, neither striking nor unusual among the Föhringers; but the captain saw with regret that Jan ate with little appetite, and that his

strength was flagging. Once at sea he had seen him sitting on the bowsprit, resting his elbows on his knees, his thick entangled hair hanging over his forehead; and suddenly he had observed him clench his fist and spring up furiously, as if he were mad. The waves rushed by, foaming like wild horses, and the storm drove them along, lashing them through the air. The vessel, however, went swift as an arrow before the favourable wind.

‘I should like to seize them, the spirits down below,’ said Johannes; and such a mighty spirit showed itself on his calm face, and in his clear blue eyes, that the captain, who had asked him what he was doing, could not help thinking of a man whom he had once seen in the north, and who was a victim to what was called the Berserker fury.

‘They looked like this when they carried away my mother,’ said Johannes, ‘and she is lying in the sea below, with her eyes wide open and wishing for me to come—yonder there, the wild white waves want me, and I will come, but not now’—he said quite calmly—suddenly pausing. ‘My mother lies at the Hallig near Föhr, and these are going towards America. I will not go with them.’

‘Boy, you are crazed,’ said the captain, and he gave him a sharp box on the ears. But in the evening Jan was shivering and feverish, so his uncle gave him a glass of Geneva and hot water to recover him. He became calm again in his words and ways, and he was more strictly kept to his work that he should not be idle and let his thoughts wander upon nonsense.

They were on the way back from New York to Hamburg. The captain had wished to go round by Scotland, but wind and weather would not suit, and the voyage had been so rough that there was a lack of men. At length the vessel was driven to Norway. The storm continued unceasingly; the mainmast had been already broken, and the sails hung down in tatters. It was fortunate that a shipwright of some skill was found in the rocky nest into which the vessel was driven, and here Jan was allowed to land; for here, as the brave old captain said, there was no temptation; there were no dainties to buy, no harlequin theatre and nonsense, as in Hamburg. The vessel was drawn up on the wharf, and its timbers were looked to and caulked; the furnaces burned clearly through the mist! They worked with all their might, for it was here winter early in October, and Ocke Hinrich urged them on and paid liberally in the

interest of the owner of the vessel, so that they might be ready to sail and not be frozen up, and be in Hamburg before the winter, in order to take back the first valuable cargo in the spring. The ship's crew had a good time of it while the vessel was repairing; and as it cost here less to be on land, and Ocke Hinrich remained on board in Hamburg in order to save expenditure—for all unnecessary spending grieved the prudent Friesland sailor—he lodged at the house of the shipwright who kept the hostelry. The people of the place, who were so comfortably off that they could take things easily, meet together here, and thus the captain spent in pleasant company the evening of many a day passed in superintending and urging on the work. He spoke sufficient Danish to make himself understood, and the little German which is common to all who leave their northern nests for trade, education, or intercourse, was the link uniting all.

On the evening of the day on which the ship's repairs had been completed, and the vessel was launched again after its three weeks' sojourn, and was pronounced seaworthy, the captain was sitting with the company in the room of the small inn. The warm drink steamed upon the table, and each was sipping his glass. The captain had looked

through all the accounts; he had finished all his business, and was now giving himself up to the easiest repose, for on the morrow, with dawn of day, he intended to set sail on the sea which was dashing against the craggy cliffs of the bay, gray and wintry-like in its sullenness, and so threateningly as though warning the mariner not to embark on it. He had brought his nephew with him, because he had kept him employed to a late hour on shore.

‘Here, Jan,’ he said, placing a glass before him that he should drink; ‘here is to a good Christmas at Föhr.’

‘Thank you,’ said Jan, and he emptied the glass and turned over the leaves of a book which he had found in a corner on the seat by the stove. It was long since he had read anything, and he turned away, for the tears had risen to his eyes. It was one of those northern Sagas which he had been wont to read at the Hallig of an evening from his father’s books, and which, with the help of the pastor, he had related to his mother in the Föhringer dialect. Here, however, he found it in beautiful verse. The language, cast in a mould at once rich and pure, flowed along in this German translation like the beautiful ringing of bells in the open air. Jan was surprised how strange and

difficult reading had become to him ; it had altogether given him an odd feeling, as if his mother were sitting with him and asking him' questions and listening to him ; and, with a side glance at the man to whom the book belonged, he laid it quietly down where he had found it.

The man was sitting there to thaw himself, for an hour before he had come in hoary and white as a snow figure, beard and hair stiff with ice. He had thrown off his rough overcoat, and the water had run down him, and he had laughed ; and in spite of his hair which, when freed from the frost, remained as white as before, he had looked far from aged with his long flowing beard, bright blue eyes, and fresh features. His tall figure—which was slightly bent forward, like one accustomed to meditation, as though he looked not only on the world around him, but also inwardly on himself—seemed as free from decline as if he had the privilege of the gods, and possessed an indestructible and invulnerable life.

‘Jochim Stureson, a bowl!’ said the old man, advancing to the table, after having looked earnestly at the boy for some time and then greeted the company, ‘but better than the last.’

‘I know,’ said the shipwright, ‘Herr Doctor

likes the strongest;’ and he went to the cupboard, poured a flask of rum into the Geneva, mixed with it a couple of glasses of hot water, and placed the sugar by the side of the bowl before his guest. The latter slowly filled his glass, emptied it quietly, took a second, lighted his pipe, pushed the bowl towards his neighbour, and signed that he should drink and pass it on, which was accordingly done without ceremony. Then he sat, listening to the conversation, taking part in it occasionally, but only with a few words, and looking at the cabin-boy, who was again engaged with the book, and who, fancying himself unobserved, did not lay it down as before. Three bowls one after another were filled at the old man’s order, and emptied by the company, he himself not taking the smallest share. The faces of the guests gradually reddened, the conversation grew warm, the mirth was general. Even the captain, who was accustomed to drink his glass with the greatest calmness, and to maintain his majestic composure, which had the appearance of phlegm under all circumstances, related a somewhat droll story, and condescended to laugh heartily at the insipid wit of the clerk, the clever man of the place. The old man who had dispensed the strong drink sat with the utmost complacency, calmly indifferent ;



but his repose was not dead like that of the others. There was an observant glance in his eye, and a fine expression about his lips; a smile which, full of grace and sweetness, rested on the rude Dutch scene before him. When he had had enough of the company, he rose and seated himself on the bench by the stove where Jan was lying and had fallen asleep. For some time he gazed at him; then, as he turned from the boy's thin face, the profile of which appeared especially noble in sleep, and looked at the colossal figure and broad red countenance of the sailor, he said to the captain :

‘The lad is not your son?’

‘Nay,’ said Ocke Hinrich. With this the conversation was at an end, the captain crept into one of the beds round the room, to get a few hours’ sleep, leaving his nephew lying on the bench by the stove. The guests had gone away, all was quiet in the house, everyone was asleep; even the stranger, who kept his place by the stove. After a couple of hours, however, he woke again with the restlessness of age, and the host and shipwright—who also did not enjoy much repose, since the captain wished to be on board at dawn of day—came softly into the warm room, placed the train-oil lamp on the table, and fetched out his

books, to reckon what the good storm which had driven in the great trading-vessel had brought him in. The old man now raised himself up, stretched his tall figure to its full height, as men do after uneasy sleep, drew out his large travelling-pouch, and arranged the plants and mosses he had collected; then he took out his pocket-book and entered some notes, while his host watched him for some time in silence.

‘Found good booty, Herr Doctor?’ he said. ‘The Herr Doctor was here just three weeks ago!’

‘I was here also sixteen years ago. You remember that, Jochim Stureson; you had just been celebrating your wedding,’ said the old man, looking at him with his bright blue eyes. ‘There are many things to be found in this neighbourhood, only not *that* which one wants. You Norwegians have little left of the spirit of your fathers; the blood of the old race only creeps through your veins, and the traditions and monuments to be found here are as scanty as the moss and lichens, the feeble beginnings of vegetation on your mountains.’

All this the stranger said chiefly to himself, for he would scarcely have thus given vent to his feelings to his host. He called him, however,

to him and begged him to procure him a horse and cart, that he might start early in the morning for Drontheim. The restlessness of his approaching departure had meanwhile also roused the captain. Johannes alone still slept on the bench by the stove, in the sound slumber of his age. The men had exchanged a few words of greeting, and the captain shook the cabin-boy, and told him that it was time to be up.

‘I have been speculating upon your speech for some time,’ said the old stranger. ‘You speak very tolerable Danish, your German is not to be despised, but I cannot nevertheless quite find out where you are really at home.’

‘Föhr,’ said the captain, not without a feeling of self-importance, for he was impressed with the magnificence of his native island.

The shipwright had lighted the lantern, and was ready to accompany the captain. The boat lay on the wharf two steps from the house. The cabin-boy took his tarred hat and jacket under his arm.

‘One moment!’ said the stranger, seizing the boy and holding him fast. Johannes’ fate was hanging on a hair; the balance was wavering. What we call a casual meeting gave a turn to the course of a life.

‘Captain Ocke Hinrich, as they call you,’ said the old man, ‘you know perhaps many people at Föhr?. I was also there once. To whom does this boy belong?’

‘He is my nephew,’ said the captain impatiently, for the moment of departure was pressing. ‘Johannes Jakob is his name; his father was the schoolmaster Jakob, his mother was Goneril Ketels, and was my wife’s sister. Both are dead. And now adieu.’

‘And I am Adam Thorson,’ said the old man with great energy; ‘and if the lad is an orphan, I demand him for myself, for Goneril Ketels was *my* daughter. When I knew her mother, the wife of Jan Ketels, nine-and-thirty years ago, and was obliged to leave her, bitter as it then was to me—for she had children by her husband, and I was a wanderer not settled in any home, and I should not have known where to put the woman had I taken her with me—Jan Ketels’ wife, I say, was with child at the time, and we had agreed that if she gave birth to a son he should be baptized Adam, and if a daughter, Goneril. She could neither read nor write, poor woman, but she kept the name. I have been driven north and south. No Föhringers came to Iceland. It was moreover not my way to afflict and trouble a woman; but I have

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never forgotten her, and if this is Anna Ketels' grandchild and my daughter Goneril's son, I am glad that he is an orphan, for I will take him with me and provide for him.'

It is impossible to describe the captain's astonishment at the bold words of the old man.

He had often heard of Adam Thorson, and would gladly have said somewhat befitting the dignity of the offended honour of the family; but words did not flow readily from the lips of the brave captain, and at the moment he knew not what to do.

The old man had called Jan to him, and asked him in German 'whether he had ever heard of Adam Thorson, who dwelt in Iceland?'

He is my mother's father, and a great hero and sea-king,' said the boy, proudly. 'My mother perished in the sea because that is his kingdom, and it is for this reason also that I have come to sea.'

The old man regarded the boy with surprise and penetration. It was of no avail that Ocke Hinrich urged him to go on board, alleging that the tide suited within half an hour; that if he lost the tide it would not be possible to leave the harbour that day, and that everything depended on a day, as winter lay at the door. Ocke Hinrich would

not for the world have taken the delay upon his own conscience, but he could not resist the imposing manner of the old man; and as Johannes, when he heard that his grandfather, of whom his mother had so often spoken to him, was standing before him, declared with a mixture of reverence and trust that he would remain with him, Ocke Hinrich, pressed by time, and protecting the rights of his master to the pledged services of the cabin-boy for several years, gave up the lad into the hands of the stranger who claimed him as his grandchild.

An hour later the bark was under sail, and Johannes was sitting in the cart by the side of Doctor Adam Thorson, the philologist and antiquarian, and also the practising physician of Reykjavik in Iceland, and was driving towards Drontheim. The boy had told him of his mother's death, and of her noble life and character. Of the grandmother, Anna Ketels, he knew nothing, for she died early; and with strange emotion and with feelings that he had not had for years, the proud old man listened to the boy's story.

He had been in Copenhagen, where he was a member of the Society for Northern Archæology, The object of his journey to Norway had remained unfulfilled. He had been in search of Runic charac-

ters which are to be found on weather-worn stones in the interior of the country; and instead of a prize of dead symbols, which only gain life and connexion in the imagination of the poet and the ingenious mind of the investigator, he had brought back with him a noble, blooming, hopeful human being, a boy of his family and race; and he was wont to say afterwards that in his journey to the Norsker land it had been with him as with one who went forth to seek his father's asses and had found a royal crown.

They had a speedy voyage, with a favourable wind, in the little Danish Government cutter, which, driven by the storm, had run into Drontheim. In the depth of winter they landed in Iceland.

For three years Johannes lived on the island, and in strange seclusion, gained a knowledge and presentiment of men and nature. The island, with its subterranean fires and wonderful conformations, with its mountains and crags of everlasting ice, with its remarkable valleys; the long days and nights; the appearance of the light in a kind of ceaseless mist; the historical remembrances, the life in Sagas and poems, which Adam Thorson kept up, proud of his descent from the old seakings whom the defiance of independence had

driven to the island; the peculiarity, the lofty spirit, the simple mode of life and ignorance of the actual world which the old scholar maintained in his vigorous old age—everything combined to awaken and foster the deep and peculiar powers of Johannes' mind.



## CHAPTER II.

## ADAM THORSON AND HIS HOME.

FOREIGN 'to all the luxury of the refined and cultivated world, and indeed to its necessary comforts, was the life which Adam Thorson led in his own home. The dwelling-house, built of wooden planks well joined together, contained the chamber, with its large hearth, in which the old man lived, kept his books, and studied, and two small apartments for the other members of his household. Two smaller buildings—in which the servant-lad and the maid lived, together with the sheep, indispensable to the scholar as to everyone else in Iceland—were attached to the main house, and the court-yard in front was enclosed by a wooden trellis-work.

In Reykjavik, as in the villages of the island, everything wore the appearance of decay. For many years, ever since Iceland had lost its independence, without acquiring any commercial importance, it seems to have degenerated and

declined. The inhabitants, moreover, are no longer, as in the old times, an element of power, exciting admiration and interest. Nature alone in her inflexible and fearful sublimity, ever asserts her old rights.

In Adam Thorson, if we may so express it, the spirit of the old northern poetry, as well as of the mighty nature of his fatherland, had become incorporated. He was peculiar both in character and appearance. With him, in his house, lived a sister, who was fifteen years older than himself, and almost equally remarkable in her extreme age. Margaretha Thorson had remained unmarried because her portion was necessary to enable her brother to study and to advance in the world. The sacrifice had been rendered easier by the course of her destiny, her affections having been engaged by a Danish merchant, whom the herring fishery had brought to Iceland, and whose vessel, detained by ice-floes, had been obliged to lie the whole winter and half the summer at Reykjavik. He was a handsomé shallow-minded man, whom Margaretha had seen with the awakening feelings of a girl, and had perhaps for this reason loved him ; but she was too proud to marry a man whom she did not esteem as her equal in rank ; and like the maidens of noble birth in ancient times, she

readily yielded to her pride of descent, which appeared to her as the first of virtues.

In Adam Thorson's extraordinary mind, which early put forth its demands and pressed forward to the goal, the sister felt an exhortation to her own power. Margaretha Thorson had lived in poor and straitened circumstances with her parents, while her brother had been at school, studying at Norway, and subsequently making long journeys. He was more than forty years of age when he had settled in Reykjavik. He had studied the science of medicine, and naturally possessing acute perception, he had as a physician worked many successful cures; but a grand imagination, which had led him to observe and comprehend Nature in the exhibitions of her power, and in her manifold appearances and conformation, and a certain inclination for adventure, had impelled him continually into other paths of science. Ever since he had lived in Reykjavik, and had unselfishly practised as a physician, with strange success, but with equal disregard of conventional art, he had been desirous to investigate the old northern poetry, and to seek for that lost spirit of the north, as expressed in Sagas and legends. In himself there was somewhat of the bold adventurous feeling of those pirates and sea-kings who

landed on every coast, who founded and destroyed States, who were anxious to become acquainted with the luxury and splendour of royal courts, and with the magnificence and wealth of life, before they returned permanently to their northern homes. There was somewhat of his ancestors' love of strife and roving in the way in which the scholar pursued his life and studies. Thus it was, that with all his power and mental gifts, with all his penetration and wealth of material, he never arrived at results for the benefit of the learned world.

Adam Thorson was well known; it was stated that he had collected treasures, and had clear ideas on many matters; nevertheless, he had no conspicuous name, and his originality of character isolated him more and more. Ever since he had lived in Reykjavik, his sister, who was learned and well versed in Latin, was his best society. *She* it was who shared with him his thirst for drinking from the waters of the original source of the old legends, and who kindled it ever anew. Translations and interpretations soon satisfied Thorson no longer. He desired to see for himself, to receive the impressions like a living form confided to his mind for its own living formation. Then he started again on his journeys, and

continued his investigations into the interior of America. He desired to know how far, in their genuine form, the legends might be traced which the sons of the Northmen had carried there. He had seen North and South America; he had wandered through Scotland, Ireland, and Scandinavia. All the property he possessed he had expended on his travels. Literary works, and whatever investigations and experiments in his peculiar way he imparted to the world, helped him to gain a subsistence, and careless as he was, Adam Thorson was never in want. Fortune had taken him by the hand, and from her horn of plenty had bestowed upon him power and love of conquest, persistency, health, and an indestructible elasticity of being. Many a love adventure had the new Northland wanderer experienced in his roving, and had brought back the treasure of remembrance as a sense of happiness, both for heart and imagination. He was a roving adventurer; his love for beauty was ardent—a quick, passionate, fleeting happiness. He had no capacity for any deeper feeling, resulting from the dependence of mind on mind, and the necessity of union and intercourse. If, for his sake, his sister had remained unmarried, then no other should occupy the place of honour at his domestic hearth.

Adam Thorson's keen eye soared above domestic cares and joys, like the eagle above the lower dwellings of man ; and perhaps it was no beautiful repose, but one based in his very nature, with which he left to their fate the women whom he had loved, and whose hearts he had won, careless what became of the sons and daughters he might have left here and there ; for he felt that everywhere, wherever a twig of Northland power is planted, it will come to something and will grow and thrive, indifferent as to the spot in which human hands may have placed it for nurture and protection. Amid ice and storm, and beneath the wildest sky, had the race thriven, and it needed not to be cradled and fostered like the men of other zones.

There was much egotism, much pride and obstinacy, and also somewhat of fantastic boasting, in Adam Thorson's nature. Towards the end of his life, however, unlike old people living in the more refined world, who often become narrow hearted and pettish in their weak cravings, he had grown gentle and full of noble feeling. Like fine wine, mellowing with age, his former unbridled power had become softened. He did much good, he had always done much as a physician ; but his manner was now such, that others loved to receive

the good rendered by him, and it was in accordance with the peculiar tone of his nature that on his last journey to Norway, touched by the sight of a boy of his own race, he should have rapidly and joyfully resolved to take to his home the youth thus brought to him by chance.

His sister Margaretha was growing daily more silent, with her eighty-nine years, and the old scholar felt the need of having a lively nature in his house. Moreover, he had really loved the grandmother, Anna Ketels and what he had heard of Goneril, and of her love for the sea, and of her heroic death, made the grandson dear to him, for he placed great reliance on the virtues of races which descend by inheritance. With Jakob, his son-in-law, he could not feel any kinship of spirit. A man who was sick and weakly was repugnant to his innermost soul; the fact alone that he had possessed and valued books of legends inspired him with some esteem for him. He knew nothing of Jakob's painting of Eve, and how he died, seized with a conception of beauty and longing to give form to his idea. Johannes himself could perhaps scarcely have told him this.

It was a happy life which the Föhringer led at Iceland. Tante Margaretha insisted that he must learn their language and the old Icelandic also,

which is necessary for reading the Sagas. Thorson, however, made Johannes learn German; for, with all the arrogance of his Scandinavian lore, he had the consciousness that in this language culture and intellectual life had flourished best; and he excused his apostacy to himself with the confession that the old Teutonic mother had given each of her sons a heritage of his own. To the German race she had given intellectual power, perseverance, and patience, by which they could maintain themselves in conflict and grow rich in the course of centuries. As Johannes sprang, on his father's side, from the German race, his path was already pointed out. The scholar truly destined his grandson for no people, no class of society, no stage of culture or position, in our modern social life. This was to him like some undiscovered land, or rather all that we become in the course of time by culture, circumstances, and mutual relations, was to him a fable, unreal, unheard of, monstrous! To him they were dwarfs full of cunning, or giants full of brutal force and stupidity, whom *man* is appointed to subdue and subjugate; to him there was nothing true and real but *Nature*, with her powers ever producing new life; to him the old gods still lived, though he had given up their names, and he made the powers and passions of men his divinities



with utter indifference to all that civilisation and morals have produced in us. Adam Thorson was impressed with reverence for the sense of eternity and for the vague forebodings which in any way find vent in the human breast, but he regarded with stoical indifference the weaknesses and follies of the age, and the ideas and prejudices of society. A man, he thought, had only to turn his back on them and to disregard them, and they no longer existed for him. In the great history of the world, as in the life of the individual, he saw nothing else than the eternal contest between light and the spirit of darkness, between power and intanse feebleness and misery. Then he saw *man* enter upon the arena, wrestling till he attained to the glory of the gods, or oppressed with the slavery and misery of daily life; and when questions arose in his mind or experiences visited him, for which, with all his courage, he knew no answer, like Job he would call God to account for having delivered his cause to the spirit of destruction.

Johannes learned much from his grandfather, though nothing regularly and consecutively; but his imagination was fed, and nature and history came before him in all the richness and sublimity of poetry. The old scholar diffused the beams of his brilliant mind over every

subject where, the curiosity of his grandson could follow him. All the misery and littleness, all the considerations and repression of our nature, such as we learn in intercourse with men and in connection with the world, was unknown in Adam Thorson's mode of education. The necessity of yielding to the fetters and goads with which our civil relations oppress the minds of the young, was kept aloof from Johannes, and Thorson rejoiced that the intellectual powers of the youth had lain fallow like the rich soil of the primeval world, ready to receive the seed of knowledge and to bring forth fruit a hundredfold. Johannes had perfect freedom with his grandfather; but he learned readily, and there was nothing here to distract and divert him. He roamed about the island, helping the huntsmen in the hunting season as they took the nests of the eider duck from the rocks, often hovering over the watery abyss with a rope fastened round the body; otherwise there was nothing for amusement and diversion. He went about with his grandfather, although the latter only rarely now practised his art in visiting the sick; and it was almost silently settled between them that Johannes should be a physician, in order that he might study nature in its highest works—in *man*. This vocation, however, was to

open to him a wide field, as it had done to Thorson. The mind and language of man, his destiny through many thousands of years, not alone his sickness but also his health, his forebodings and dreams, his consciousness of God and his power, his will and influence, his birth and death in various years and ages—how immeasurably much lay before him! Thorson's eye beamed, his bosom glowed, the richness of life thrilled through his soul; material, abundant as the stars in the milky way floated before him, unfathomable in its immensity, whenever he spoke of *man*, of this fountain of inexhaustible matter.

‘Go forth into life and do not be dismayed,’ he said, opening the Bible. ‘A wise man here, as they call him, in the stiff old Judaism, which infuses itself into the life and working of minds like an ossified ghost—a man whom they call *wise*, has said: “All is vanity; there is no new thing under the sun;” and woman is “more bitter than death.” But I tell thee woman is sweet, the light of thy happiest hours; and all is new under the sun and nothing grows old, but thou thyself in the feebleness of thy mind and in the wasted powers of thy body! The true man is new in every changing hour of his life, to-day's fulfilment and clearest light vanishes again before his view in the reflected

splendour of new suns and forms! Christ has redeemed the world from the curse of death. He has shown in Himself that the stiffness and constraint of the grave is nought. There is no death for mankind, living and existing as they do through all centuries! So cleave to the light and believe on thyself, and then thou hast life!

Johannes received the enthusiasm, the desires, and the joyousness which Adam Thorson had maintained so freshly in his solitude, as the elements of life natural to man. Who lived more happily than he? The household furniture in the scholar's dwelling was indeed as poor as is only to be found among the poorest; but nothing else was needed or desired. The food was bad, but Thorson's sound teeth could masticate the salted meat, the dried fish, and the sinewy reindeer; and the strong drink in the evening stimulated him, without exhausting or overcoming him. It was in these moods that he indulged his inclination in his views of life and nature.

The long hours of those northern days, when the sun gives scarcely a little light, were impressed on Johannes' mind with deep beauty. The lamp burned on the wooden table, the old man sat on the bench, his books and treasures adorned the room. Near the hearth, where the kettle hung and

hissed, sat the Tante Margaretha, turning her spinning-wheel or slumbering from the continued buzzing. By her side lay her cat, staring into the fire ; the clock ticked in the stillness. Without, the snow fell and the wind blew, and the pine-leaves scattered on the floor, and the green fir-twigs on the wall, produced an agreeable and resinous perfume. Adam Thorson read and wrote and drank, and then, laying aside his pen, would indulge himself by talking about the world and the age, about nature and mind, about man and his destiny, often as if uttering apophthegms and prophecies. He was too lazy to write, he thought ; moreover, it was unnecessary, as each knew things of the kind for himself ; and it was strange that no sooner did he take up his pen and place the blank paper before him, than it seemed as if his mind froze up and lost its power and flexibility. Perhaps this arose from the fact that much in him was nevertheless ornament and glitter, and not the pure gold of knowledge and perception ; but in lively conversation, excited by the interest and presence of a fellow-being, Thorson felt himself aroused to the utmost. He loved his grandchild as he had never loved anything, and he set great hopes upon him.

## CHAPTER III.

## CHANGES.

JOHANNES had been two years in Iceland, when one evening Tante Margaretha fell asleep on her seat by the hearth, never to wake again. Her death made such a deep impression upon Thorson, that he wished to be alone, and he sent his grandson away with a Greenland whaler, who had taken on board some sailors from an island in the north of Scotland to assist in the fishing, and had to drop them again on his return. On a small island near Iona, the ancient Ilcolmhill, where St. Columban's holy feet once stood, and the royal graves belonging to Scotland's mythical age are to be found, there stands, even at the present day, side by side with a few fishing-huts, a monastery which, richly endowed, had maintained itself with its ancient privileges amid Protestant surroundings, protected probably by its insular position. It was now a place of pilgrimage for the Catholic clans of the highlands as well as for Ireland.

Johannes here found a hospitable reception

from the abbot, who had for many years been the friend of his grandfather. The ancient architecture, the inner court of the monastery, with its cemetery full of flowers and shrubs; the long corridors and small cells; above all, however, the lofty-vaulted library, with its narrow-pointed windows, where the abbot, with his refined and wise countenance, was wont to sit; the parchments and manuscripts, the terrestrial and celestial globes, the books and folios; the monks, who, mute and spectre-like, flitted through the gloomy chambers; all attracted Johannes, and filled him with curiosity and strange admiration. The monastery had always enjoyed the reputation of great learning, and in periods of universal wildness and disorder it had preserved its science and culture; it had sent forth apostles and confessors of the Christian doctrines to the heathen north, and to Germany; and even in the present day missionaries were despatched from thence to India. Johannes felt an ardent longing for the treasures and intellectual riches which lay locked up in the library, accessible only to the initiated. Why did he stand without, and not enter in?

One side of the monastery lay exposed to the open sea; the high walls rested on a rock; two towers, now in ruins, probably in ancient times

protected it against the heathen pirates. The basaltic rocks which surround the island formed a sort of dam, and when the tide was out a dry path was left between them. Johannes roamed about here with restless longing ; and when the report of his gun frightened the birds from their rocky nests, and he heard the sea strike against the clefts and crags, ever again the curiosity of a latent passion impelled him to return to the library. The word of knowledge yet unopened to him allured and attracted him with a strange promise.

It was no wonder, therefore, that when he returned to Iceland, he buried himself in the studies and pursuits which his grandfather delighted in placing richly before him. He now became thoroughly acquainted with the legends of the gods and heroes. The Catechism also now engaged his attention ; for Jan was obliged to go to the pastor in Reykjavik to be confirmed, and Thorson offered no objection to his doing so, as Christianity was a phase in mental development like any other. Johannes, however, was now acquainted with both the Icelandic and Gothic languages, and he read the Sagas aloud to his grandfather, as his eyes had begun to grow weaker after the death of his sister Margaretha.



Thorson, who, like all Icelanders, was proud of the learned reputation which the island had had in the twelfth century, considered it necessary that his grandson should now enter upon classical studies. He had himself never especially cared for Latin; he had forgotten much, and he had indeed never rightly mastered the language. A teacher was found for Johannes in the person of a decayed schoolmaster, who was employed as tutor in the family of the highest government official in Reykjavk, and who could not have retained much in his feeble head. Thus it happened that Johannes, to his detriment, was behindhand in Latin, and he felt the disadvantage of this in his examination.

His grandfather was of opinion that it was an error to begin early with this study, and that the youth of Teutonic race had no occasion to trouble himself with the civilization of the Romans and Byzantines, until he was rooted in the consciousness of his own nature. 'For when we perceived what they were,' he was wont to say, 'when they subdued our fathers, and dazzled them with their wisdom, jurisprudence, and civilization, then we first saw that we could not need them, and that we could not admit their spirit amongst us. Much of what we have had to re-work of all this, with all the energy of our own strength, has remained

in the heart of the Teutonic people up to the present day ; and that which we have swallowed, digested, and received, as it were, into our very system, ferments within us like some contagious matter, and we are tormented with it in spite of habit and transmission.'

With the Greeks it was indeed different ; and Johannes, on his side, was to grow familiar with their lore. The old man himself instructed the lad in Greek ; Homer's songs and Æschylus' tragedies were kept by him by the side of his favourite northern poetry. In fact, he would not unreadyly have confessed that the Greeks had the pre-eminence in the beauty and maturity, which a fortunate destiny had infused into the works of their mind. They were *one*, however, in heroism, and in the spirit animating nature, and in their love for the terrible and grand.

It was summer when Thorson, who had never felt himself at home in his dwelling-room, since he had missed his sister from the hearth, started on a journey to Copenhagen, taking his grandson with him, for he wished to 'put his house in order' that he might depart in peace, should the lot of all men befall him. They had a rapid and successful voyage, and the scholar was well received by the Archeological Society, a member of

which he had been for years. He succeeded, moreover, in accomplishing the business which had brought him there. He possessed a farm in Iceland, which he sold for 10,000 bank thalers; and he disposed of a part of his library, and of some rare manuscripts, for some hundred thalers more. The sum did not seem to him in proportion with the worth of the collection, but the society would not give more; and Thorson, who would not and could not bargain and higggle, concluded the matter for the round sum.

His intention was to leave his grandchild sufficient for him to study and make his own way in the world; and he placed the money in the Copenhagen bank until he should be of full age, in his two-and-twentieth year, nominating his nearest relatives, Captain Oche Hinrich and the smith at Oevenom, as guardians of the young man. All this was legally settled. Thorson wrote a letter to the two guardians, exhorting them not to bias his grandchild in the choice of a profession, but to let him go on his own way, and only to take care to watch that the money was duly paid him, and that no injustice interfered with his enjoyment of his property. Thorson had retained for a year the use of his entire library,

and about sixty volumes had been placed aside for his grandson.

The two Icelanders had been almost fêted in Copenhagen, the young man as the appendage of the grandfather. Both were somewhat peculiar in their style and manner. They were invited, however, by various people both to dinner and supper. Thorson was opposed to much; he considered many things foolish, and expressed arbitrary opinions in society. The King, however, who was interested in northern archæology, had desired that the Icelandic should be introduced to him, and had invited him to table. Adam Thorson requested his Majesty to consider the traces which his iron-nailed boots would leave behind on the polished floor. The King who, as is well known, was full of urbanity, sent him word that a carpet should be laid down, and Thorson, with his dirty boots and Bergen-op-Zoom coat, appeared among the courtiers. The refined knight-marshal, in spite of all the instructions he had received, started ten steps backwards when he had to usher him in. The scholar, however, took his place at table between two ladies of high rank, who were also enthusiastic on the subject of northern antiquarian lore; but he could not look

at the foolish faces, draped up as they were with feathers and flowers, without a certain amount of wonder and pity ; and he had no taste and no answer for amiable phrases and light chatter, so that the ladies left his side wearied and bored, while he sat silently and unobserved. The old Iclander, however, looked magnificent ; his lofty figure towered above all, as though he were king of the feast. After dinner, his Majesty, who was somewhat weary with the labour of a copious noonday meal, honoured him with a few words, and then he was dismissed. Adam Thorson remarked that evening to a professor of the academy, who knew well how to esteem the distinction shown to the old scholar, that a king now-a-days was but a figure on a card, and that the heroes and commanders who had had power and worthy successors, inasmuch as they had been called to go forth as pioneers, held different banquets in their high seat at the Walhalla, when the drinking-horn went round, and the Scalds sang of their *deeds*.

Johannes pitied his grandfather, who came home hungry after these honourable entertainments, for the old man had no keen relish for a repast refined and piquant according to modern notions ; his long use of Geneva and brandy had

blunted his appreciation of the sparkling excellence of the iced champagne. He had, moreover, a violent dispute as to the reading of a passage in the old Edda; for he was positive and easily excited to anger, and knew little or nothing of courtly respect and polite opposition; so, vexed and wearied, he set sail, rejoicing that he was going back to Iceland. Before leaving Copenhagen, however, he wrote a letter to his famous countryman, Thorwaldsen, whose works, exhibited there, had delighted him and seized his fancy, and he begged him to leave Rome and Italy, where he had lived long enough, and to come to Reykjavik, that he might see the grandeur of nature, and obtain an insight into the northern Sagas, which still seemed to be lying, to him, in twilight obscurity.

This time it was no secure government vessel which conveyed them back, but an old Norwegian schooner, going to Iceland for the fishery, and transporting thither all sorts of goods. The voyage had not been an unprosperous one, until about four leagues from the island, when a violent storm arose, and they were driven out to sea again. There was such a heavy sea that the little herring vessel, built of fir-wood and badly manned, could not stand against it; it soon sprang a leak, and

with all their labour at the pumps it was only held above water for a short time, while the storm threw it hither and thither like a ball on the waves. As they made no advance, and the island, which lay in view, came no nearer, while the water in the hold increased rapidly, and the captain, inciting his crew to great effort—for each man was working for life—could not fail to see that it was of no avail, they let down the boat, which was but small, though more secure and sea-tight than the leaking vessel. Little provision could be put in, for the boat was already too deeply laden with the crew and the two passengers. No one ventured to take with him the least of his property; each was obliged to leave behind the clothes and other things that he possessed; and soon the vessel was seen to sink; and the captain, never raising his eyes from the perishing ship, placed himself at the helm. All who were allowed took an oar; for ten hours they rowed about in the cold storm, and Johannes once more saw the sea in all its terrible and hostile violence. Thorson was perfectly quiet, and his clear keen eye looked over the grey expanse of waters. When the captain, who possessed much physical strength, took his seat among the rowers, he placed himself at the helm; his grandson, who also helped to

row as much as he was able when his turn came, sat near him, looking sometimes lovingly and almost joyfully in his face.

Not a word was said by any as to the great need and probable danger in which they stood; but Thorson looked at the captain with an expression of deep and heartfelt satisfaction.

‘These are *men*,’ he said, to his grandson; ‘of all these no song is sung and no history boasts, and see how they bear themselves in danger and fatigue; that is *man*, when he is in earnest. See, Jan, the storm is abating. What do you think, captain, shall we come safely out of it?’

‘As God wills,’ said the captain, and all went on working and rowing, and made their way as well as they could through the desolate waters. The compass showed the direction in which the island lay, and by good fortune a coasting vessel which had gone out for herring perceived them. The vessel steered towards the boat, took up the passengers and brought them to Reykjavik, since Thorson promised to pay the master of the vessel for the passage, and to compensate for the time he had thus lost. The weather had, moreover, changed, and they ran into the harbour with a calm sea.

‘The devil knows,’ said the captain, ‘why we



must meet with such storms!’ He had lost everything. The schooner, which partly belonged to him, and which had been but little insured, lay in the sea. Bare and destitute, he stood with his sailors; but, with the stoical resignation peculiar to the mariner, each had submitted to his fate. And it was fortunate that a Greenland whaler, which belonged to Flensburg, had come into the harbour during the storm; and the commander having lost some of the crew on his voyage, could give them for the time, shelter, bread, and work. The captain accepted a subordinate place under the commander, just as if he had himself never commanded a vessel; and Thorson distributed amongst the crew sixty thalers, all the ready money he possessed, and which was really to have contributed to his maintenance during the next half-year. To the captain he gave a pewter goblet, edged with silver, which had been in the Thorson family for several hundred years.

‘I am glad that I have it, and can thus bestow it,’ he said; ‘only I am astonished that during the course of so many years none in my family nor myself have found occasion to apply it in a similar manner.’

From this time forward Thorson spoke much of

*fame*, and expressed his opinion that true manliness and manly honour neither excites notoriety nor cares to do so.

They now again spent the winter together. Various discomforts, however, found their way into their home, owing to Thorson having given away his ready money, and fettered his hands by that which he had arranged securely for his grandson. He himself, moreover, was not what he had once been. There was a gentleness and pliability about him which had never appeared in him before, and he could speak of human frailty with a kind of sad smile. The truth is, he felt the after-effects of all that he had endured beyond his powers in the terrible voyage. With all the passionate feeling of his nature, he had rebelled against the dread of seeing his grandson perish before his eyes. It seemed to him as if he must struggle and wrestle with the sea as his heroes had done with monsters, in order to snatch from it the young life which he loved—he never knew till now how deeply and strongly. He could not endure that *he* should die and pass away into darkness and obscurity before his light had illuminated the world! *He* must breathe in the light, in joy, in the sunshine! Death, in whose

face he looked so calmly, assumed a form of terror so soon as he threatened to lay his hand on Johannes.

The love and anxiety for his grandchild, which he restrained from all outward expression—the impossibility of rescuing his darling from so great a danger, in spite of all the power and might of his heart—was an effort which had shattered the old man's strong mind and vigorous nerves, as with the terrors of death. To men who are accustomed to live with their inward powers duly balanced, such storms thrill through the very fibres of their life. The death of his sister shortly before, his residence in Copenhagen, and his altered mode of life there; Thorson felt that his health was waning, and he compared himself with an old tower, the lower beams of which are decaying, which still stands erect and looks as of old, but is no longer sure.

The winter lasted long that year; it did not grow milder till the summer was advanced; large blocks of ice floated over from Greenland, making the atmosphere icy, keen, and cold. Johannes gained a new insight into the noble mind and indestructibly joyous temperament of his grandfather; but Thorson urged him no longer to study; he spoke no more of his favourite

northern poetry, his passion for collecting antiquities had abated. He read nothing; he would sit absorbed in reverie, and would say that he to whom death was approaching, to whom this last mighty mystery of nature was about to reveal itself, must acquire the habit of contemplation.

Towards the spring Thorson fell into a low fever. It was the first serious illness of his life. It seemed as if he must succumb to it; but he struggled through it nevertheless, and recovered from his sickness with wonderful tenacity, and as if invigorated for a new old age.

But he was mentally changed; it was as if his soul had assumed a new garment, and his spirit looked on the efforts and achievements of the past with smiling indifference, and with almost tender interest, just as the mature man regards the amusements of his childhood. He looked upon himself as dead; he desired no longer to guide, rule, and influence others.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SEPARATION.

It was the 15th of July, the first summer day; and an abundance of grasses and plants, which the rapid vegetation of the north had produced in a single day, were lying before him on the table, when Thorson, who had scarcely spoken for weeks, called his grandson to him, and communicated to him that he had made up his mind, and would conclude all his affairs and retire to Iona. The monastery was rich, so that it could exercise hospitality, and he would take some property with him. It was indifferent to him that he had been baptised a Lutheran. The abbot, his old friend, would not attempt by disturbing ceremonies to bind and cumber a soul striving to free itself from the fetters and forms of earth. The climate was milder there than here, where it was too severe for his old age!

‘Jan, my dear son,’ continued Thorson again after a time, as his grandson looked at him enquiringly and deeply agitated—and he rose from

his seat and drew up his tall figure, so that it looked still taller—‘we have lived lovingly and happily together, and I thank you for all that your youth has given me; but the time is over, and our paths now go asunder. When I sat here through the long winters and heard the storm-wind, when I saw the clouds passing in ceaseless motion, and the sea ever restless, everything coming and going, beginning and ending, I said to myself “Let him go forth! He cannot remain here; life needs him.” Man knows nothing of himself so long as he remains under tutelage, and it is necessary for each to learn whither the instincts of his soul tend, what strength he possesses, and what power and courage he has for the struggle with the world and with his destiny. Life is the great touchstone. Courage and nobleness of mind, my son!—with these thou might encounter every monster that desolates the world.

‘I have thought much while I have been sitting here, whether I ought to go with thee, and to whose hands I should confide thee. Of the many whom I know, none assimilate with me in feeling and nature; patchwork, makeshifts, and secondary considerations, are regarded by them as the main substance and central point of things. It is repugnant to me that one man should dare to mark

out the path of another; the watchmaker, who with the key of his understanding, presumes to set going and to regulate the mechanism of the nature within—no weary satiated heart shall interpret the dreams of thy youth. And now enough, my son; we will part to-day!’

We will pass over Johannes’ feelings at his grandfather’s communication. Thorson was, however, prompt in the execution of his intention. Just because the separation was difficult to him, it must be speedily executed and endured. Johannes soon heard of his grandfather’s arrival and reception at the monastery; he himself remained in Iceland until all business matters were dispatched and concluded. Thorson had written that he was satisfied with his new residence; that Johannes was often to let him hear from him, but to expect only a few letters in reply.

Thus he was again alone, and all the bonds of life and love were sundered! He travelled, however, to Föhr, to confer with his relatives. There he learned that the interest of the property, securely invested for him, was insufficient to send him to academies or universities. His second guardian, however, Captain Ocke Hinrich, had returned from a voyage to Hamburg, and the owner of the vessel had a scholarship for the

Johanneum to give away. Johannes therefore went to Hamburg, and his aunt, Frau Göntje, gave him back the picture which his father had painted during his dying illness, and which had stood all these years enveloped in Jakob's shroud, just as Frau Goneril had left it. Johannes left it as he received it, and would not from fear undo it or look at it.

Adam Thorson's library, meanwhile, in obedience to the contract, was transported to Copenhagen; his farm premises and movable property, which he had given to the town for beneficent purposes, were sold by auction; but, in acknowledgement of his services as a physician and scholar, a small wooden monument was raised to him by the city magistrates, which, if the storm has not blown it down, is still to be seen in the market-place at Reykjavik.

It must be a peculiar feeling to a young man, who, leaving his home, and the happiness and habits of a warm loving domestic life, finds himself all at once solitary and alone in a large city. The yearning for life, the thirst for the strange and new elements which constitute the world, are, however, so great, that youth rejoices in its fledged condition, however secure and warm may have been the nest beneath the protecting



eaves of the peaceful roof. 'Rather would I fight my way through the storm'—this feeling is so natural to the growing power, and thus becomes a lasting impulse, and is what we call life.

Johannes was not one of those youths who wish for freedom, and who destroy natural ties or dream visionary schemes in haste and impatient longing or premature anticipation. He sat in the small room which he possessed in the convent-like dwelling of the two old maids; he read and studied, he went to the Johanneum; he knew no one, he sought out no one, and so his life passed on. Days, weeks, months passed by, and he was like the novice in a monastery, living in his cell, devoutly believing in God, wrestling with him in prayer, constraining Him to incline towards him—and *his* God was knowledge and science. A man must either be an idiot or endowed with grand intellectual powers, or with unusual strength of nature and a capacity for concentrating his thoughts, who can live in his opening youth as Johannes at that time lived, in a world full of sunlight and movement, in the midst of a great city. He read and studied; and he desired nothing else. It had not humbled him that he had taken at first a bad standing at

the examination, that the most part of which his grandfather had taught him availed but little in his new life ; his knowledge was as luxuriant in its abundance as wild seed, or, as ferns and shrubs and plants in the woods, which grow entangled in their abundance ; his thoughts and conceptions were like unplanned stems which fitted no framework of the building. It had not discouraged him that he had to take a place behind people of his own age. ‘What I do not know I shall learn,’ he thought ; ‘they have had better opportunity than I.’ And he took the books and set himself to that which the method of the schools, one-sided in its sure course, has designed for the mediocrity to which in a certain sense the world belongs.

But he would *learn*, and go forwards as quickly as possible. Thoroughly ideal was the striving within him. The reality he knew not. What he saw in Hamburg—nature, men, surroundings—all looked different to what he in his imagination had conceived of such a city ! All was low and ugly, public buildings and churches devoid of seriousness and sublimity ; there was nothing here to awaken mind and fancy. All that met his eye looked petty and restless ; but the world of *mental* acquisitions lay before him,

and here he could enter ! He had come into *this* world with the impelling feeling of a conqueror. Wherever men had already gained a footing, he would follow ! Wherever anyone had carried the lamp of knowledge, albeit into the gloomiest recesses ; wherever the starry flight of genius had borne some privileged mortal—that boundless land, however deep its foundation, however immeasurable in its extent, he would wander through it and see it ! It was no abstract resolve in him. He had not gone to the work with the idea of conquering a world of knowledge, like some intellectual Alexander ; the thought had grown within him from small insignificant beginnings, and the circle had widened, becoming ever wider and wider, and seeming in its extension to embrace the universe ! When he thought on what was attainable by man, on what must at length open to the persistent enquirer, his imagination hastened forward to the proud gaol with passionate vehemence, for whatever was possible to another he could succeed in also !

The most wonderful thing was, that a being with such proud aspirations could sit with scholars in a class. He had, however, seen the defects of his earlier instruction ; he was too poor to pay a private teacher, and he was impressed with the

necessity of persevering for a time, just as if he were building the vessel with which he intended to launch forth upon the great sea, or were preparing the instrument to work at the temple in which his mind was some day to wander satisfied and strengthened. His life seemed altogether to be one of contrasts; from the sea and the solitude, and the sublimity of mighty nature, he had come into a narrow noisy street. Instead of his strong-hearted mother, instead of Thorson's lively conversation, instead of intercourse with sailors and men growing up amid nature, he had the cares and opinions of two anxious, childish, unawakened women, who appeared softly like spiders, and moved in dark corners, though without harm and venom; he had indifferent teachers and school-fellows as participators in his daily and hourly life. At the same time he had not sufficient to eat. His attendants gave him everything better than they had themselves; but, with the small sum which he paid, it was necessarily scanty.

He had heard how much everything cost in Hamburg, and how little he had to spend; he ate, therefore, as little as he could, and starved himself till his body had grown accustomed to be satisfied with the meagre fare. At first he missed the strong drink to which he had been habituated in Iceland,

yet he could soon have no longer borne it, for his physical force declined, and his mental life became over-powerful. The ascetic mortifies his body, and, without knowing or desiring it, Johannes had fallen into a similar mode of life. The days glided away without any external events to mark them.

He walked through the streets and passed by human beings without seeing them or caring for their doings; he scarcely knew even the features of those with whom he had intercourse and communication. A library or museum stamped itself in his memory; the world within him he regarded as real; without, was only reflection of the things of which the mind was conscious. Had any one asked him what was the aim and object, what the end, of his striving?—To feel the universe; in grand knowledge to feel himself an individual, in connection with all existence. This was the aim of the instincts of his nature, without his being able to give an account of the greatness and unattainableness of that which he desired.

He had, however, been scarcely a year in the school, when he ceased to attend the classes regularly. For some time a repressed impatience had burned within him; he felt that he was losing his time, and everything held him back. The

teachers had perceived the material of which the young man was made who had fallen into their hands, but it was not possible to make him yielding or susceptible to the teacher's influence. Combined with the bold proud powers of conception which nature had bestowed on him, was a self-willed spirit. He received nothing upon authority. Precept and advice fell upon him like a spark which lay dead, until a breath from his own mind passed over it, which then burst into flames. Johannes felt that he could learn best in his own fashion; that he must independently seek, if he wished to find. Thorson's opinions had taken root within him. If instinct leads the bird over the sea to the region where he is to brood, and back again to his warm home with certain, unwavering calculation, and at the fixed and necessary time, why should not the mind of man trace out what was necessary and congenial to him, and be able to appropriate to himself somewhat of the seed everywhere scattered? The mind will construct its own world, and will fashion itself in obedience to an inner necessity, impelled by the yearning for light and air and the utmost possible perfection.

Johannes fancied, therefore, that he was doing well to make his way without the assistance of

others. He knew now what he needed in order to go to the university furnished with the requisite knowledge. The scholarship, moreover, he would on no account have any longer made use of, for he had been upbraided with receiving the benefit, when he had become irregular in attending the classes. At the very first a couple of self-conceited youths had alluded to the fact that he was living on the money of others. Johannes had never thought of this. He might, moreover, have found nothing in it that a man should give away what he does not require for himself, and what may be useful to another; but when he perceived that the base aspersion would have an effect upon him, he looked at the offender, and without ceremony stretched him with one blow of his clenched fist upon the ground. On this occasion his self-defence resulted in imprisonment; but henceforth all took care and avoided the bookworm, who could strike so powerfully when his anger was excited. Johannes, however, had gradually grown pale and thin, and he seemed still more so in his ridiculously-made clothes, which his deriders said had been fashioned by a Greenland tailor, because they hung so loosely about his body. His hair fell roughly over his thin face, and his eyes looked with gloomy indifference, unless they were flashing

with anger or beaming with cutting derision, or were seen by some sympathetic being to sparkle with the noble fire of a vigorous mind.

Freed from school, he began his studies independently and with great eagerness. It was the mathematical teacher at the school, who—astonished at the acuteness and mental power of the young man who had been consigned to him as thoroughly ignorant of this branch of knowledge—made him come to him to instruct him in his own leisure hours; and as he found him inclined to undertake any mental work, and ever ready to exert afresh every nerve with vigorous patience, he formed the opinion that he could make of him a mathematician and great scholar, only that Johannes embraced with unheard-of passionateness every new thing; and it sometimes seemed as if his imagination would run away with him. It was with him as with the charioteer, whose horse always wishes to go his own way, rears up at the guidance of his lord and master; and instead of allowing himself to be driven, bites the curb.

This man, wholly absorbed in his science, and child-like in his inexperience of the things of life was for some time Johannes' sole society. On all great festivals they dined together, fetching the



dinner themselves from a cook's shop, for the scholar had no ménage of his own. As an amusement after dinner, they made calculations and consulted books; and the mathematician now found that Johannes was familiar with the Icelandic language and with the northern mythology and heroic legends, as though they were the fairy tales of our infancy. As, however, he perceived that Johannes would, after all, not pursue mathematics, he advised him to adopt his more favourite branch of science as his vocation, so that he might penetrate to the depths of it, arrange his material, and learn to treat it critically. Johannes, however, adhered with earnestness and zeal to that which was necessary for the examination. He now took private lessons, for which he had to earn the money. He instructed one of his teachers in Icelandic, and he taught Latin to some boys; his resources were so small that no other expedient remained to him. He could not understand the difficulties that often presented themselves to his pupils, in matters which he himself, after giving them his serious attention, had quickly mastered both in form and element.

The hours of instruction which he gave and received, soon became his only intercourse with the world. He was firmly resolved, in his own mind,

to study medicine, although he had hitherto done nothing in that direction ; but he adhered to his grandfather's decision. Until he was of age, he could not go up to the university, and there still lay two years before him. In order to live at the university, he would have to use his capital, and this his guardians would not venture to allow. Life began, according to Thorson's idea, at a later period ; and Johannes never wrote to demand a change in his decision. Whatever had been once settled, as regarded outward circumstances, he let rest as it was. Moreover, it seemed to him no loss of time to go on living in his cell, buried amongst his books. Whenever he now went out for his amusement, he went to the town library, or he visited old book-shops, or he inspected the stores of itinerating Jews ; and, with the sagacity of a huntsman, brought back many a curiosity from his expeditions. Laden with books—often with both arms full—occasionally glancing at their contents by the way, he would return home and take the same seat in which he sat the previous day, and hoped to sit on the following. One thing, however, stood steadily before him as a sacred truth : namely, that man was great and noble ; that he had much to accomplish in the world ; that he must work and investigate deeply

in order to exercise his powers ; that a brilliant life was before him ; that, as yet, he possessed nothing, and could do nothing—but bright in the sunshine lay the great future before him ! And again a year went by, and Johannes had lived in solitude, as though he were in a desert and not in the busy town of Hamburg. His good old hostesses were proud of him, and imputed his steady course of life to the influence of his agreeable home with them, while Johannes lived devoted to his first passion and pursued its phantom.

Opposite to him dwelt a button-maker ; the people had been reduced in fortune, and kept house in a disorderly manner. The daughter was a pretty girl, and the old ladies observed with vexation that as she cleaned the upper room, opposite to that of Johannes, she would remain standing on the window-sill, and lingered over her work. She cleaned and washed the window-panes, and tripped about the room in her wooden slippers and white well-drawn-up stockings, her dress tucked up, and sang and left the window open, and looked to see if anyone was observing her. But Johannes did not observe her. And the old maids mended and darned up his linen, and bought second-hand articles of clothing, which he now and then required. He himself would

have gone in rags ; he did not care to trouble himself about anything ; and what money he possessed was scarcely sufficient for books.

This period, however, had been a wonderful time to him ; happy beyond measure, and rich in itself. Far into the summer nights, when his windows stood open, and a soft mild breath was wafted to him, as he sat absorbed in his books, it often seemed to him as if the world were his own, and that the great sun were casting beams of light into his heart. In the silence that surrounded him, with what enjoyment could he follow out an idea, and pursue it through the phases of its development ! He thought, ‘ How am I to reach the spot at which the fountain first gushes forth ? I see the water flowing, making itself a course, becoming at length a stream on whose banks are the dwellings of men, and on which they sail and carry on their commerce ; I hear the waves roaring, but I know not whence they come ! ’ Then it was history which attracted him—the epochs in which the passions of men assume such fatal forms ; then he would seek for the record of great deeds, of noble men, for traces of divinity in the human mind, and he was proud and happy and elevated in his tone of feeling. Yet the facts satisfied him not ; he ever

desired to penetrate deeper into the secret workshop of human thoughts; he longed to know *whose* power and essence produced the first germ of the deeds, the works, and the destinies of men!

Johannes read the most various books—chance was his guide; without criticism, he gathered together within him the rich material. One author referred him to another; he had gradually worked his way through a pile of books, and had mastered their contents with restless curiosity and versatility; and forwards, forwards urged his mind, as though he must gallop through the world in haste.

## CHAPTER V.

## STUDENT LIFE.

DURING the autumn and winter he had worked after his own fashion. The winter was unusually severe that year, the cold had not set in till between Christmas and New-year, and the frost had lasted till Easter ; so that the stones cracked, and everything was stiff that was exposed to the air. Johannes suffered from the terrible cold in his room ; it seemed to cut him to his very heart, and he wrapped himself up in his different articles of clothing, and sat with a foot-warmer under his feet ; for no heating was of any avail ; the great Dutch-tiled stove gave out no warmth. The hostesses sold some rococo furniture of which they had always been proud ; and the sum it realised was expended in firing. Johannes received more than his share of it, in the Dutch-tiled stove, but to no avail. In vain they resolved to make the sacrifice, particular as they were in their sitting-room, that Johannes should sit and study there when he wished to remain up late. It was in-

deed, even there, only moderately warm ; but it was a beautiful climate compared with the Icelandic cold in Jan's apartment. This also failed, however ; he must sit in the usual place ; he missed the walls and all the objects in his cell ; he felt himself distracted and confused by everything strange that met his eye. He would rather endure the cold ; his body must become accustomed to it, as it had grown accustomed to be satisfied with scanty fare ; his woollen coverlet kept out the worst cold, and he cut a hole in it that he could put his arm through, to the despair of its possessors, whose love for him received a shock in this act of caprice and self-will, from which it never recovered ; for they now believed everything that they had heard of the stupidity of scholars in affairs of life, and unfortunately they were soon to be kept in ignorance of the late hour to which Johannes studied ; for there came a time when he was no longer yielding and contented as formerly, but something seemed to have instilled itself into him, changing him from within. They avoided saying anything to him, and groped about him sooner than provoke his wild spirit.

With all the study and reading of that winter, however, Johannes had come to such a pass, that he suddenly stopped, and could do nothing more.

His passion and his desire to glean the grains of wisdom, understanding, and truth from the immeasurable material gathered together in books by the human mind, was so great, that he ever ran forwards; and now, as if arrested by a mountain of ever-increasing height, he came to his senses, and asked himself how he was to pass on, how he was to carry all his treasures, how he was to search every depth and receive an answer from every remote distance? He had read too much, he had opened his mind to too much foreign matter, and reason and memory seemed to refuse to harbour more. The craving hunger of his desire of knowledge, which had ever impelled him as it were to seek fresh booty, was appeased in its first vehemence; his own nature now pressed forth like a palm-tree amid temple ruins. The living power was hemmed in between cleft and rift, but nevertheless it maintained its growth and sought the sunlight.

Physically also a change had taken place in him; a kind of restlessness and dissatisfaction in living to himself, a doubt as to his doings and actions came over him. He had grown still taller that winter, and his countenance had increased in expression; his blood, restrained beneath the ice of the late maturity of the north, pressed to heart



and head, but solitude held him in her ban ; the actual world was closed to him. A strange dreamy life began at this time to develop itself in him ; it continued at night when he fell asleep, and he was often fearfully agitated with those terrors which lie in the natural things surrounding us, and which man does not feel because he imagines he has in his power the things to which he is habituated.

Towards the end of the winter it struck the old maids that the ink was dry on the pens that lay on Johannes' writing-table ; it struck them that he walked restlessly up and down his room, like some wild captive animal in his den in the menagerie ; and when he even began to go out and walk—God knows where—morning, afternoon, and evening, they began anxiously to look after him. Johannes went on the ramparts, in the fields, through the streets ; he had no object and no aim. It was only that he could not endure his narrow room, the walls of which were burst asunder by his imagination, and which was peopled with shadowy forms. It was natural that at such a time he should grasp his pen. He wove together the creations of his fancy into a drama, which he named a *Mystery*. But his dream was not of a pleasing kind ; Titans and Sphinxes, sprites and

goblins, demons and spirits of light, appeared in it. It was to be a poem, like the ancient traditions of man, where all is symbol, where gods are formed out of the elements, and the Eternal One is enthroned on clouds, pronouncing decrees of fate. In grand but confused touches he had sketched it out; the human beings, the actors in this region of mist, came and went like unreal shadows; the power to form and fashion the whole was not given to him; it was the wrestling of the old night, but it could not bring forth the day.

We cannot venture with our feeble pen to say how the transition from abstraction to life proceeded in Johannes; it is enough that with the breath of the first spring wind after that long laborious winter, there rose within him the feeling that he must leave his cell, and that the sun shone that man might live in its glorious light. The first steps, however, which he made out into the world were shy and embarrassed. He knew no one; he was poor and diffident among men. No door was opened to him; he did not even know at which to knock. His mathematical teacher, whom he had long given up, now visited him again, and seriously counselled him no longer to roam as if homeless through the regions of universal knowledge. As he wished to study medi-

cine, and adhered to this idea, though hitherto he had done nothing in this direction; as he must pursue some branch of science for his future maintenance—since man is not fed by ravens like the prophet in the wilderness—he ought now to set about it and seriously persist in it, otherwise it would come to nothing. He must acquaint himself with botany and chemistry, and whatever else was accessible to him in the Gymnasium here, as a help and preparation for the difficult study. All that he had hitherto done was nothing but the pleasure of the Sybarite, who reposes on the silken cushions of comfort and follows his inclination and caprice. Earnestness and thoroughness were in this way lost.

At this period also one of the letters arrived which Thorson wrote occasionally from the monastery to his grandson. It had been more than a year since Johannes had received any tidings. Thorson now wrote that, being strengthened by his long rest, he was preparing to start for India, whither the monastery sent missionaries. The journey, he said, seemed far at his time of life; but the apostles of our day no longer travel poor and unprotected, with the staff in their hand. The northern Sagas of gods and heroes were the fragments and ruins of a far older and lighter

religious structure ; he should like to investigate this on the spot. The kindness of the abbot made this possible to him. All that Johannes had told him of his works and strivings reminded him of his own youth ; it was all nothing ; the man, the everlasting longing of the creature, seeking and seeking whence the sources of life gush forth. His grandson was to have no care for *him* ; if he died, he should find his resting-place under palm-trees.

This letter had made a painful impression upon Johannes. The coldness and consistency with which his first friend had given him up, cut him to the heart ; but Thorson's energy and courage roused him from inactivity and dreaminess and weariness.

He therefore now attended the chemical and botanical lectures in the Gymnasium, and soon made acquaintance with a young man whose tender loving heart became attached to him. He was the son of one of the physicians belonging to the hospital ; he was also studying medicine, and, like Johannes, he was to repair to the university in the following year. Together they now roamed over the fields, and over the heaths and sand-hills of the Holstein woods ; and Johannes rejoiced in the fresh air and in spring, while his

companion classified plants and looked for herbs. How mighty did nature seem to him with her loving countenance! Together they also visited the hospital, and in attendance on the physician they might pass through the wards. An interest, which had been hitherto unknown, was now awakened in Johannes, and he could not but admire the penetration of his grandfather, who had early perceived that he was fit for the vocation of a physician. He had been present at some dissections, and through the interest of his friend he had been admitted at operations. He stood apart, leaning against the wall, his blue sad eyes keenly fixed on all that was happening, while sympathy and pity were expressed in his firmly compressed lips. He admired the dexterity of the hand following the dictates of a clear mind, the certainty of the science, thus penetrating into the mysterious structure of the human frame. His interest increased more and more. One day it happened that he saw a poor woman, faint and consumed with pain, die under the operator's knife. He had caught the look of suffering, and had heard the cry of agony! The physicians looked at each other—had a mistake been made? Waiting the issue outside the door stood the children of the poor woman, not venturing to

ask those who came out whether the result was successful.

Johannes went away deeply agitated. He felt, however, now impelled to his prescribed vocation. That is a noble art and science that ventures to compete with nature, to place itself in the way of sickness and death, and has to do with man himself and his living body. An event, not perhaps unusual, had had an important effect upon him, firmly deciding him with regard to his future; but for the moment the impression it had left saddened him. Cold death, the pain and agony of the human being, the distortion of illness, which ends with the sundering of all human bonds, with the burial in the earth, the insufficiency of all science, the errors and deficiencies of knowledge, the old dreads which for a time had swayed his imagination, all now crowded in his mind, and the riddle of existence filled him with horror.

He began now to examine thoroughly, with a kind of trembling interest, the houses and gloomy streets, especially the courts and alleys where the poor dwell in Hamburg. He remembered not that even here happiness and enjoyment and light may enter; he only saw men wrestling with sickness and with the cares of life. An infinite sense of sympathy came over him, and he felt his heart throbbing

as with great energies; as though help, and deliverance, and action were within his power. Now in his solitary wanderings in the open air, when he went to botanize, instead of stooping down for plants (a scanty treasure in these regions), he would look across the vast expanse over which the heavens stretched like the ring of eternity; and he would ask himself what the ceaseless beginning and ending of all things was to signify? What was the aim of Nature, with all the life which she created and ever again dissolved? Was she not weary with the ceaseless re-working of her material in producing ever the same phenomena? Was she not satiated with ever anew moulding and fashioning the same primeval forms according to the same unchangeable laws? And man, who possessed that within him which made him dare to free himself from her fetters, and to ask the meaning of her riddle, is he not silenced in his questioning because his power of thought ends with departing consciousness? What eager thirst for knowledge had already impelled him! How ignorant was he! How feeble his mind! What a small part of the great whole seemed to him accessible to the power of the individual! Who had the enjoyment of the great whole? Who surveyed the comedy which the races of the world were acting

on a large scale, and all individual beings on a small one? who conceived it in its full nature, essence, and meaning? For thousands of years had it thus gone on upon the earth, which was nothing more in the great universe than a spark in a sea of light! The origin of man and his apostasy from God, sin, eternal punishment; his connection with that which he fears, forbodes, and hopes, and which he alone looks at with reverence; how did man arrive at his grandest ideas? How did he attain to the consciousness of a mind wrestling to free itself from the constraint of nature? How did he receive the idea that man must atone for violated duty? In the depth of his being dwells the accusing power. He feels that he *will*, he *will* be the maker of his deeds, the creator of his own freedom.

It was time that Johannes should come forth from his solitude; he was not fit to be a thinker and philosopher, as we have seen. His secluded life had already lasted too long.

Chance kindly aided in bringing about his transition into life. The house in which he lived fell into other hands. Again two women occupied it; but this time it was a mother and daughter. And since the daughter was to be interwoven with his life, we must become acquainted with her.



*BOOK THE THIRD.*

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## CHAPTER I.

## WARNING AND COMPANY.

It was at noon, on a hot day in August, that a large crowd of people had crowded together in front of a tall gabled house in the Cremon, one of the oldest streets in the old part of Hamburg. They were looking through the open house-door with the dull board, over which old balconies projected, into a room, the door of which also stood open. An old alderman came out and told the workmen—who, in their black linen smock-frocks and leather aprons, stand about the great merchant-houses in these streets, at the back of which magazines and warehouses lie—that no doctor could be of any avail. Warehousemen, watermen, and others, who were accustomed to work for the house, and who had their employment there, pressed forward, eager to learn how the misfortune had happened. For an hour before, Herr Warning, the possessor and sole proprietor of the

firm of Thomas Warning and Company, had suddenly fallen down when on the Exchange, and it was feared the stroke would prove fatal. He had been carried to his house, and it was said that he still lay unconscious.

The interested crowd, however, dispersed before the decisive moment had arrived within the chamber, for Herr Warning lived until the evening. Once he had suddenly started up convulsively, and had made a movement with his hand towards his waistcoat pocket, had stared at the physician, and had attempted to raise himself; but the symptoms of death had soon afterwards appeared.

‘It is over,’ said the senator, the cousin of deceased’s wife, to the head clerk, who was standing anxiously by his side. ‘What a misfortune—a man at his years.’

‘Scarcely forty-five,’ said the book-keeper, drawing a deep breath.

‘He was plethoric, rather too stout latterly,’ said the physician; ‘and then the great heat; it is twenty-four degrees (*Reaumur*) in the shade.’

‘The London post came in late,’ said the head clerk in an uncertain tone; ‘the deceased received his letters while at the Exchange.’

‘Well, well,’ said the senator severely and solemnly, ‘that has nothing to do with his death.’

Give the intelligence to the people outside.' And with proud step he advanced towards the corpse, looked at it gravely, took the papers in the dead man's possession and the letters which the London post had brought into his own keeping, and placed them in the desk of the deceased.

Some days afterwards the widow was sitting in the apartments on the first story, which the family usually occupied in the winter. She had come in from the country house on the Elbe, as the senator had requested an interview with her.

In the house there was that peculiar stillness and void which is generally felt on the days succeeding a funeral. On account of the great heat, the body had been buried on the third day, and the deacon of St. Katharine, the father-confessor of the family, had spoken of the pious resignation and rare composure of the Christian wife. With a serious air, dissatisfied and anxious, the senator had spent many hours in the house; he had been occupied in the counting-house till late in the night, and he had had his own ideas with regard to the hazard incurred by an old and respectable family when a stranger is allowed access into it.

Matters stood badly, very badly with the house of Warning and Co., and the senator could not, and must not, conceal it from his cousin Frau

Warning was considered a superior woman. She was some years older than her husband. Until the death of her mother, the widow of an alderman, she had led a joyless life, and had never murmured when no one was good enough to suit her mother's desire, and the right wooer for her was not to be found. The widow could not give her daughter much, for she herself was obliged to live as became her position ; she had only 200,000 banco marks for her income, and she belonged to a family, the heads and members of which had always stood high in the town. The daughter had grown up, trained in all the prejudices of the family. Blameless honour and the highest civil position constituted her just demands, and beyond these her heart was not stirred by the slightest desire. After her mother's death, however, an unprecedented event occurred. The orphan herself scarcely understood how it had been possible. She knew her mother would turn in her coffin at such a circumstance ; but nature began to assert its sway in her, and she felt inclined to accept the offer of a stranger who had travelled with her on the steamboat from Hamburg, and as it rained on landing, had taken the liberty of holding his umbrella over her and accompanying her home. No one could say anything against Herr Warning ;

he was respected on 'change ; his books showed that he had a good business and excellent connection in the corn trade, and the 200,000 marks of the alderman's daughter passed with herself into the hands of her lover. Herr Warning was by birth from Stade, and his father had been a carpenter. He had one brother living, but no other relations. Once the step had been taken, he had been received with consideration, and befitting propriety by the honourable family, which had been obliged to admit him into their circle. Frau Warning had felt herself happy and contented ; the small mistakes occasionally committed by her husband against the forms of society, which she, owing to the training she had had, felt and understood in their finest distinctions, were the sole disagreeables which she had experienced in her married life. Herr Warning had a large business, he made a good deal of money ; and without living luxuriously, she spent considerably ; for in a good Hamburg house everything, according to the old notions, ought to be liberal. Everyone must have his right : high wages, good fees, and excellent food. The old Hamburg families knew nothing of the niggardliness and ostentation of modern luxury. With perfect calmness the widow received the communications which her cousin had to make

to her. Her only care was her daughter; and she thought how strange it was that her child, like herself, early deprived of a father, was to grow up under the guardianship of a mother only. Might her duty to her daughter be as faithfully discharged as her own mother's to herself! It had filled her mind with thought when the little one, in her immoderate grief at the funeral, had clung to her mother with passionate vehemence, and would not leave her lap. Poor child, she had thought, how much effort it will cost to break this liveliness of feeling; she is now six years old, and has not yet learned silence and obedience.

There were, however, more heavy cares approaching to intercept the widow's sighs; for the senator entered, and circumspectly and prudently as he went to work, his communications were of such a nature that his cousin fainted on receiving them; and when she recovered herself, she was loud in her lamentations at the disgrace her deceased husband had brought upon her daughter and her whole family! The senator explained to the widow that she need not associate herself with her husband's affairs; that as she had not been married quite seven years, she had the right to withdraw what she had brought him, which would secure her own future and that of her child. The

head clerk produced the books, and these showed that Herr Warning, who was doing business for enormous sums, had had no other capital than his wife's property and a large credit. The Corn Law had not at that time been passed in England, and the corn trade was almost as much of a hazard as the gaming-table. A large speculation had turned out badly; and in addition to this, a London banking-house connected with the business had stopped payment.

'He would have been a gainer even this time,' lamented the head clerk. 'Just about half as much money as belongs to madame is still in hand, and we could have come to a fitting settlement with what we have in stock! If Herr Warning had only lived! The ruin of the London banking-house would not have affected the business. You do not know his talents, you do not know how he handled everything; he made the impossible possible! Herr Warning had a genius like Napoleon!'

The senator shook his head. 'He died at the right time,' he said, interrupting the imprudent panegyrist; in fact, his indignation was so great, that at the moment he forgot the widow. 'Your model of a merchant, this genius, this extraordinary man, was a *gambler*! Anyone venturing and

risking in such a manner may easily make a good business! If it succeeds, he pockets the advantage—if it fails, other people lose! Such a man is atrocious! The Exchange loses its respectability through men of the kind! It is a happiness that he is dead! He would have brought his wife and children to beggary, and the family would have had to support him—that, however, would not have been the worst part of the business!’

‘Dear cousin,’ said Frau Warning, ‘I beg you—’ and she broke down like a doomed woman, letting her arms fall languidly, and covering her eyes with her handkerchief, as though she could look no man in the face. Suddenly she raised herself up, and with an arrogant air, as though she had been a born princess, rejecting every attack on her unapproachable dignity, she exclaimed, ‘I WILL not be the widow of a bankrupt! No one in this town shall point at us. My husband’s affairs *shall* be my own, and I will not withdraw my property. I have had parents to whom I owe it. If the family does what it can, the disgrace is averted!’

The senator stood speechless before his cousin. He was her trustee, and was to be the guardian of her child, and he brought forward reasonable remonstrances. It was to him, however, perhaps also not unpleasing, that the reputation of the



family should be preserved ; yet no member of it would have been inclined to make great sacrifices to satisfy the demands of just payment. Frau Warning would listen to nothing. She belonged to those women who move in a narrow circle, who rarely arrive at a decision ; but when they have done so, they persist tenaciously in their resolve. She still possessed a small property from her aunt, which was secured to her for life, and the interest of which had been her pin-money. This sum remained to her at this time of general ruin. She felt herself, moreover, so much entitled to the high esteem of his family, that she thought they would not fail to afford her shelter and everywhere the place of honour. The affairs were, therefore, arranged according to her desire. The house of 'Warning & Co.' progressed without disgrace to the dead, and no derogatory slander was cast upon the speedily forgotten grave.

The widow, moreover, was for some time the subject of admiring eulogy, and the thorns and stings of her altered position were scarcely felt. Nothing, however, evaporates more quickly than admiration of actions which we would perhaps not imitate under similar circumstances, and the widow soon lived tolerably neglected in the small *étage* which she occupied in the

vicinity of her rich relatives. She had no brother and sisters of her own. She was still always invited to extraordinary family festivals ; and she always went, until it happened one day that the place which she felt herself entitled to occupy at table was otherwise filled. From this time she absented herself, and removed to the Brook gate on the Elbe, where none of the people lived who had formerly known her, and where she had in view the tower of St. Katherine, the favourite tower of the aristocratic district in which she had been brought up. It was good for her little daughter to be in the country, and altered circumstances and fallen greatness were more endurable in a new place. The widow had made it possible to live on her small income, with the help of a pension which the family yearly contributed for her. But the world lay to her within the precincts of the town of Hamburg. She would have thought sun, moon, and stars for ever lost to her, if she had not taken her place on Sunday, in the first row of pews to the left of the pulpit in the church of St. Katherine, which her great-grandmother had occupied before her ; while the burgomaster and senators, in velvet embroidered dress, large folded white ruffs above their black garments, silk stockings and buckles,

and with swords at their side, sat opposite to her. The obeisance which these gentlemen, as well as other dignitaries of the town, sitting behind them, were wont to pay to her, was a refreshment and consolation to the widow. Among personages such as these she had lived ; she felt herself on a level with them ; her old fashioned hat and often-renovated mantle must invest her in the eyes of such men with the greatness of her principles. In Hamburg Frau Warning *must* remain. It was in vain that her husband's only brother, who had gone as a young man to London, and had established a great tailoring house there, gradually accumulating wealth, made friendly offers to her. She had never wished to have anything to do with this connection ; moreover the tailor had refused to give the corn speculator any money to invest in his business, and in consequence the brothers had quarrelled, and had not seen each other again.

Frau Warning had, moreover, after her husband's death, received no assistance from this quarter ; the more stinted she was, the more difficult was it to her to recognize the rich but still vulgar relationship. Opportunity for doing so she had indeed had, for her husband, who was a widower when she married him, had a

son by his first marriage, whom his brother, not having any children of his own, had adopted. Frau Warning had scarcely known her step-son, and in her present circumstances it was a happiness to her that she was relieved from all care of him. More than ten years passed away for the widow in solitude, and without any participation in the joys of the world. We see sometimes, in the gloomy back streets of large cities, pots of flowers standing on the window-sill of humble dwellings, bringing forth scanty blossoms of mignonette, stocks, and even occasionally of stunted monthly roses, almost always scentless, and very different from their sisters, which are breathing forth a fragrant perfume in the fresh air, in meadows or in woods, or which are standing in good garden mould, enjoying a sufficiency of sunshine and light ; but the mignonette, stocks, and roses on the window live also after their fashion. Frau Warning's lot was like these flowers. She had to maintain herself in the utmost restriction possible, and her anxiety was to appear to belong to those classes who spin not, nor weave, but their heavenly Father feedeth them. So, she lived in a small ground-floor apartment in front of the Brook gate, and she could be seen sitting amongst her flower-pots

at the faultlessly clean window, her knitting or sewing in her hand; in her head the cares of that unremitting economy which relates to the smallest matters, perseveringly searching out every grain of subsistence; how every piece may be transformed and turned and ironed that it may be available to the last thread, and the smallest minimum applied to the necessities of life, in order to be able to say at the year's end that it has been got through, and a certain propriety maintained in the eyes of others. Any one seeing Frau Warning sitting at her window, had before him one of those pictures of the Dutch school, of the lifelike truth of which we are convinced. They are not beautiful, these worthy females; but the expression of the countenance is characteristic, with the lace cap surmounting the stiff ruff and the dark gown, a gold chain round the neck, and a hymn-book or a rose in her bejewelled fingers. Such faces are still to be found in the few patrician families of Hamburg, where the current of modern times has not wholly effaced all peculiarities; where the traditional usages keep the heart under discipline; where, as in the canals of the loved city, no perilous currents of passion are to be found; no foolish yearning for the ocean beyond agitates

the calm water, but a certain habitual mode of thought stamps the features with a distinct and earnest character.

Franziska, Frau Warning's daughter, was a lively child, full of feeling and imagination, and the mother cherished her as she did the flower-pots in her window, feeling nothing but care and anxiety about the fate of her child whenever the youthful power burst forth with lively vigour, budding and shooting, in spite of its repressing nurture, where it was least expected. It was in vain that the mother ever brought her back again into the shade, that she might learn to live without sun and without fresh air.

Franziska was still almost a child when she understood the position of her mother, her poverty and her circumstances. Her mother was wont to think aloud in her presence. She would tell her daughter of her old family, and of the brilliant circumstances she had left. Franziska knew already how weak her mother really was; but she indulged her with all the ardour of her soul. The sacrifice of her property which the widow had made, floated like a standard of victory over the beloved head, and father and mother—this first love of beings born of love, we mean of those natures in which the most ardent impulses appear

as enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, and joy in self-forgetfulness—the one dead, the other poor and forgotten out of love for the dead—*this* was the point at which the world opened before Franziska, as if illumined by a noble light.

Franziska had had little instruction. Her mother was too poor to send her to a good school, and she had not allowed her to mix with children of a lower class. They lived in the house of an English language master, and Franziska learned English with the children; and when she could read she made more rapid progress, as she had a good ear and a talent for languages. A French lady, who had once been Frau Warning's governess, and had instructed her in her youth in this most necessary branch of education, as the French language is ever reckoned, taught Franziska French. The mother herself superintended the reading and writing; and for hours she kept the little girl at her side, lamenting that she had no fancy for the fine handiwork over which her mother herself destroyed her eyesight, and which she sold in shops, taking the precaution that none should know *who* worked it.

Frau Warning could not do *more* for Franziska's education with the little she possessed, and the small addition which she had from her relatives.

Many had gradually deserted the widow who had once belonged to her friends, and many who ought to have assisted her gently reproached her with having, at the time when she had given up everything, behaved unjustifiably towards herself and her daughter, as well as towards the relations whom she now burdened. So Frau Warning grew soured, and pined away from day to day; and it was fortunate that Franziska had large resources in health and vigour of heart, or she might have subsided into a foolish nonentity in the society of her increasingly desponding mother. She could not, however, be glad and merry as a child, nor as a maiden exuberant with the cheerfulness of youth.

Life stood before her full of serious demands, accompanied by the phantom of want and care, and the phantom wore the features dearest to her. She looked with the eyes of her mother and with reproach at her long-deceased and much abused father. Franziska's heart was oppressed but not humbled. Her cheeks were pale, her brow was grave, her slender figure was not rounded like the ripening and expanding fruit in the sun; she lived in a shadow, yet her heart glowed with almost too great ardour of feeling. No one had hinted to her, least of all had her mother done so, that it was she who must learn to work and come



forward, so that her mother might live differently, might be well and happy, might live long and want for nothing. This made her so eager with her books; she learned French and English in order to give instruction in them. When scarcely fourteen years old she went to Herr Klaren, the famous musician, and with a beating heart and a voice trembling with shame, hope, and fear, she told him who she was, and how her cousin the Herr Senator had for three years paid for her music lessons, and that he thought now she could go on practising without direction; and having heard that Herr Klaren gave instruction sometimes gratis, she had taken courage to ask him to teach her. And when she had brought forward her request, and had overcome her shame, pride, and humiliation, and felt her heart free and could raise her eyes to the famous musician, he looked at her with a strangely touched and serious expression and said nothing, but led her to the piano, and she played a fantasia of Mozart calmly through, and so pleased the old man that he arranged that she should come three times a week. And now a period of work and happiness began for her. She thought also that she could now help her mother.

Several years went by—Franziska was now

eighteen years old—she had made great progress in music; she understood what she played, and her very soul seemed to enter into the melody. Her teacher took interest in her advancement; he gave her good books, and was glad when she would converse openly and cordially with him. To develop her talent for public performance was alien to her shy and proud nature, and Franziska moreover had imbibed too strongly the prejudices of her mother. But she now gave music lessons, and with what conscientiousness and fidelity! So great had been her joy over her self-earned money, when she brought it for the first time to her mother, that her soul seemed borne upwards, as on wings.

Her mother, however, was sitting musing on the sofa. For some years she had rarely known an hour of health, and all the weaknesses of her temperament now manifested themselves. Everything caused her uneasiness and care. Whatever Franziska undertook her mother blamed; whatever she did was rarely right, and Franziska could scarcely say a word that her mother liked to hear, or that she approved of. She was obliged to enter softly, to serve, to wait, and to care, and she did it readily, never thinking of herself. A whole year passed by in sadness and patience, until at length

the mother went to the baths, and returned home strengthened, and both once more looked cheerfully into the future.

But Franziska had grown pale and almost too serious in the time of trouble, shut out as she had been from all open and cheerful intercourse with her mother. It pained Frau Warning deeply that her daughter should have to work and earn money, and that she could not occupy the position in society to which she was entitled. For herself, she renounced it, and had made up her mind to it; but she could not do so for her daughter, and it became all the harder to her, the more Franziska did for her, and showed herself worthy of a better fate.

It happened that a cousin, who had been long in Mexico, returned to Hamburg as a rich man, and visited his impoverished relative. He came a second time, and then more frequently, and Franziska's manner with her mother convinced him that she would be a grateful, sensible, and yielding wife. The cousin was a little over forty, his temperament was somewhat choleric, and a gentle wife pleased him. He could have knocked at any door and have been sure of a friendly reception, for he was rich and he moved in the best circles of society. But Franziska

pleased him. He would indeed rather have had a beauty ; but he thought of the difference of years, and was judge enough to know that the young girl would develop, and with the help of more elaborate toilette would present an elegant appearance. One thing only dissatisfied him in her : he had once heard her play the ‘ Sonata appassionata ’ by Beethoven ; he had entered unperceived, the mother had signed to him not to disturb Franziska, and he had then closely observed her. She was absorbed in her music, and her countenance wore an expression which he had not seen before, and which almost frightened him.

This, however, did not disturb him long, for he was so situated that it was not necessary for his wife to give instruction and practise music of this kind. The little bit played for amusement after dinner, which he heard with pleasure, a waltz or potpourri from operas for performance in company, would not excite her or make her nervous.

Franziska had at once assented, when her mother, with joyful countenance, communicated to her her cousin’s offer. She had thought of nothing else than that her mother would be comfortable again, and would revive and be happy. The cousin, who was waiting in the adjoining room,

and urged for a speedy reply, had made her the most distinct promises on this point. Franziska would almost have fallen at his feet with gratitude and emotion, and she allowed the ring to be put on which the wooer had brought in readiness. When, however, as her betrothed, he attempted to kiss her, she raised her countenance, looked at him with fear and horror, tore herself free, and rushing into the adjoining room, threw herself on a chair, her heart revolting at the idea, and agitated with passion! But she calmed herself, went back, and submitted to the kiss of betrothal. The lover hastened to announce his engagement to the world. Congratulations, banquets, presents, bouquets, visits of ceremony, all the forms usual on such occasions in Hamburg, overwhelmed Franziska. She was suddenly admitted into a brilliant life. All the world spoke of the rich gifts, of the superb arrangements, of the splendid dowry, which the generous bridegroom was bestowing on the poor girl. The mother was to find a suitable dwelling in her daughter's house. The engagement was only to continue for six weeks. The bridegroom wished to have the honeymoon over before the winter, that his house might then be open to society, and that he might return the civilities shown him by others.

While all seemed combining thus brilliantly for Franziska's future, a struggle had begun in her mind, which threatened to paralyse her hope and courage. A deep aching, longing, lay within her—a sadness which oppressed her more heavily every day. She felt that she could suffer death for her mother, but that she could not marry for her sake, and her mother was now happy!

The lover imputed Franziska's reserve and seriousness to modesty and maidenly shyness. He was full of kindness in his care for her; he was neither disagreeable nor repugnant to her: only he was so alien to her and so diverse from her, and this increased more and more with every day. But she had given her word. In a broken-off betrothment there lay, in the eyes of her mother, the death of all civil honour. Franziska also considered it wrong and dishonourable not to adhere to a given promise. To offend a man who had trusted her, to expose him and herself to slander and ridicule, seemed to her as impossible as it would be to defy or to do anything contrary to nature! She had never told her betrothed that she loved him. He seemed satisfied, and foreboded nothing what was passing in her mind. A relative of some position, who had taken the bride under her special protection,

seemed to have cast a glance into the restless and agitated heart ; and the remarks she made to Franziska, in worldly wisdom and good sense, made her clear as to her own feelings. She knew now that she was unhappy ; she had a feeling as if she were lying at the brink of a precipice, and was throwing herself down with her eyes open. Why had she acted so inconsiderately, so over-hastily ?

The lover had to make a journey on business during their engagement, and Franziska felt that her good angel would help her over a difficult time. Her experienced patroness had told her thousands of girls enter upon marriage with reluctance and fear ; that this subsides in time, and that love afterwards takes its place. Her mother looked at Franziska anxiously and enquiringly. Timidly she avoided her ; then with passionate tears she fell into her arms, assuring her that all was well, and that she was quite happy !

The wedding was to take place in the following week, and Franziska had a distinct feeling that she was becoming thoroughly untrue and dishonourable. The lover had returned. She was to see the house, which was ready in its splendid arrangements. The betrothed girl looked so pale and strange, that the lover felt himself called upon

to comfort her tenderly ; and now arose a struggle in Franziska's mind—a struggle which she felt must in the end set her free. She could not be utterly ruined ; she was of too vigorous a nature for that. She told her lover ; and it burst forth bluntly from her shattered heart, that he must pardon and forgive her. It was wrong, of course, not to keep her word, but—and hiding her face in her hands, she burst into a flood of tears.

We will pass over Frau Warning's grief as well as the indignant surprise of the lover, the anger of the family, and all that was justly or unjustly said in a world of propriety at such refractory conduct. Franziska herself returned, with a lightened heart to her teacher, and to her musical studies. She stood now courageously before her fate, as if awakened and purified in her innermost soul. An elevated joy, a grand confidence came over her. She knew that she desired ever to be true to herself, and so she gave again her music lessons ; and when she went through storm and rain in the miry weather earning the bread of dependence, a vague presentiment of magnificence would fill her mind, and she would feel as if the world were lying before her, and that she would yet take from it what belonged to her, and what was necessary for her happiness.



Ever since the event which Franziska had feared as a source of discord, greater heartiness and warmth of affection had existed between mother and daughter. They talked together of various things. Amid tears and tender caresses, they interchanged their confessions, and the blessing of openness was diffused over both.

The mother was alarmed at the greatness of the sacrifice which her daughter had intended to make. It was evident to her how great was the evil she had nearly brought on the being dearest to her by her soft-hearted self-seeking, and fretful anxiety, and by her desire for honour and respect before men. She felt, moreover, that her daughter was more than all that fortune and wealth could have afforded her. From this moment she resolved that it should not vex her if Franziska gave music lessons, and was dismissed or sent for at the pleasure of people who would not have ventured to sit down in her mother's presence. She reconciled herself to the fact of her reduced circumstances ; and as she no longer considered it necessary to attach any special value to her pride, she became healthier and better. The lamentations which had torn Franziska's heart became rarer ; she restrained herself from loading her daughter with reproaches,

and Franziska's fresh nature gained the ascendancy. A time, moreover, soon came when she had the delight of doing a great deal towards increasing the comforts of the small ménage. Her pianoforte lessons were well paid; she was Klaren's pupil; and with great joy did she bring many a small comfort to brighten their daily life!

How satisfied was she with everything herself, begging her mother to put up with it, though she had been accustomed to better things! How she looked a thousand times at everything, rejoicing that she was able at all to purchase anything! Each little pleasure which they could enjoy was a delight to her heart; how she reckoned out what she could herself do without or delay procuring! What did it matter to *her*, whether she wore a new gown or an old one? It was all one to her, so long as others were pleased and satisfied. *Love* alone she needed; beautiful music, good human beings, loving warm looks, free nature, sunshine, good books! When Franziska began to think, she perceived indeed that her desires were almost insatiable.

Fortune, as one calls her, seemed, however, nevertheless inclined to bestow her favours on both mother and child. This time she appeared in the person of Frau Warning's step son, who re-

turned to Hamburg after an absence of twenty years. Herr Edward Warning had been to India, and, assisted by his rich foster-father, had established himself in Bombay. His business relations had now brought him to Hamburg; and it was natural that he should be solicitous about his father's widow. He was already a partner in a flourishing business, and it was befitting that he should choose a bride from a respectable Hamburg family. The house stood in connexion with his own; it was not improbable that they would enter into still closer business relations, and that Herr Warning would eventually remain in Hamburg. All these circumstances rendered it desirable that his near relatives should live in comfortable circumstances. He felt himself pledged by gratitude to his father's widow, because by the sacrifice of her property she had preserved the honour of the name he bore.

It was not possible to arrange matters better than Herr Warning had done. He replaced the widow in possession of the half of the property which she once relinquished. He was not yet able to pay out the large sum, but he took it as a debt upon himself, and pledged himself to pay a yearly annuity instead of interest. Franziska felt an enthusiastic gratitude towards her brother.

Her kind, generous brother, who cared so tenderly for her mother, now stood among the noble forms of men and gods, in whose honour she raised altars in her heart.

It happened, however, that about this time the house in the Lower Street, in which Johannes had long lived, was to be sold. In this house Frau Warning had invested money which she possessed from a relative of her mother, and there was now a danger that, in the compulsory sale, the sum would be partially lost. Herr Warning advised that they should take the house, and wait to sell it at a more favourable period. It was partly well let, and the occupants declared themselves ready to remain; the one unlet storey could be arranged by mother and daughter living in it with ease and comfort. Thus it happened that Franziska and Johannes lived in the same house. He was, however, to have no intercourse at all with the ladies. Herr Warning had settled with him that he could have lodging and breakfast, but not his dinner in the house. He would have considered a boarder unsuitable for his mother or sister; he had nothing against the quiet lodger, whose breakfast could be attended to by the maid-servant; but he begged the mother to make no acquaintance, but to keep herself wholly aloof

from her lodger, as it was best under circumstances of the kind.

Herr Warning soon took his departure, and the ladies were in their new abode. In spite, however, of paper and freshly-painted doors and new furniture, they did not find it as agreeable as the dwelling near the Brook gate, where they had lived so long, and where they had had the broad noble Elbe in front of them. The mother, moreover, knew not what to do with her time, now that she had servants to wait upon her; several acquaintances who visited her again, pleased her less in reality than they had done in remembrance. Franziska, too, who had no further occasion to work, but who was to enact the lady, though under still limited circumstances, had hours when she felt as though she would like to put on her hat again and give her music lessons as of old, through storm and rain, bringing her earnings home, and seeing whom she would, and avoiding whom she chose. These, however, were only passing shadows. Dependence imposed no heavy duties on her; but she had a delicate feeling, endeavouring, out of gratitude, to conform to the wishes of her brother, who had pointed out to herself and her mother the social circle in which he considered it desirable that they should move.

## CHAPTER II.

## NEW EMOTIONS.

JOHANNES had not yet exchanged a word with the ladies, although they had been already a month in the house. He felt a certain shyness and embarrassment when he once met them on the stairs. He now frequented a neighbouring ordinary, where he had his dinner with artisans and people of a lower class. The dirty den did not please him, but he had no intention of making a change, for where he once was, he generally remained; and, moreover, in the approaching September he was of age, and could go to the university and spend his capital, as he would gladly have done at the present time in order seriously to pursue the studies belonging to his profession. It was just the period of his transition from a complete living to himself to that common interest of life, which we have before mentioned. When Johannes now sat of an evening in his room, he was no longer absorbed in his studies, but he read our great poets, and was often in a mood

which inclined him to listen to Franziska's music, the tones of which reached him with strange distinctness. She studied Bach, Beethoven's sonatas and symphonies. Her pianoforte playing had been at first burdensome to him ; he had wished it at a distance just when he wanted quiet, for now and then at this time he had himself made some poetic attempts, and the rhythm of the music, which occasionally jarred with that of his verses, had compelled him to lay aside his pen ; at length, however, the chaotic noise and clatter seemed to him by more frequent listening and hearing to grow distinct, fashioning itself into groups, and assuming form and meaning ; and now it became an accompaniment to the restless strivings of his inner life ; and there were hours in which the melody seized him, and seemed to carry him upwards as it were on the wings of its soft tones, as with the power of a noble and perfect life.

A kind of mental sympathy, a strange interest, had in this manner been awakened between him and Franziska, and Johannes thought of the time when, while a boy, he had wandered with his mother on the sea-shore, and had listened to the deep roar and the alluring whisperings of the waves. Goneril's noble heroic figure stood before him, as though he had not lost her ; and he would

feel himself solitary, and long to get out of himself, as though he were seeking something, and must still sit there in conscious, calm, but not painless resignation.

In this condition of mind he encountered Franziska; and when the young girl, who ever since she had been in the house, had remarked him with restless and timid curiosity, and with irresistible longing, met him one day on the stairs as he was going out, and begged him in her own and her mother's name to visit them, he did not decline. He went that evening, and again on the following evening, and soon every day. It is true he remained only for a few hours; but the widow had forgotten her son's wish and warning. It never occurred to her that a young man who was no older than Franziska, who had nothing and was nothing, who was neither gallant nor attractive, could be dangerous to her daughter. Franziska, moreover, never spoke of him; she did not attire herself any better for his sake; she seemed to think nothing particular about him. So the widow allowed Johannes to come until she had herself grown accustomed to him, and by habit and constant intercourse had become fond of him.

Franziska received instruction from Johannes



in history, literature, mythology. The widow was well aware what young girls of the present day ought to learn, but hitherto she had never been able to have a master on such subjects. It seemed to her all right that Johannes should teach her daughter; she set down the lessons conscientiously, was always present, and so far all was in order. How many books did Johannes now convey to Franziska! He spoke with her on various subjects, read to her translations of fresh tragedies, Shakespeare and Faust, which he was himself now only beginning to understand, Götz von Berlichingen and the Nibelungen, repeating to her now and then scraps of old northern poetry, and reading aloud to her what he had translated into German. He lived among the great primeval beings; he dwelt in a world where the passions are great and strong, and are expressed in proud language. His nature, formerly so reserved, opened to Franziska; it was as if his thoughts became distinct to himself in the breath of her being, and in the presence of her pure and serious eyes. Mute and solitary as he had lived hitherto, he felt free and light in her society; and never over the vaguely awakening soul of a young girl had a fairer light been diffused,\* never had it known a richer

flood of enthusiastic feeling. Just as Johannes had once stood before Adam Thorson, Franziska now stood before him—astonished, elevated, and yet in blissful silence repressed within herself, thankfully shy in the sense of happiness, neither hastening nor refusing aught, but calm and rich in the foreboding of an indestructible for ever which was to be her fate.

This intercourse had lasted for some months—it was three days after Christmas—and Franziska had so vividly before her the place where he had stood, the moment when he had first entered, that she could never have forgotten them, had she lived for an eternity. How she felt the beating of her heart when she heard him open the door of his room, when she heard the stairstep creak, when he came down to them of an evening!—and there he stood, with his tall figure, with his young noble countenance, and his blue earnest eyes gazing at her. Frau Warning was accustomed after tea to retire to her arm-chair by the stove, fancying that she was knitting and taking part in the reading and instruction; but she generally fell asleep, and when she awoke she would have asserted that she had not left Franziska for a moment alone with the young teacher. It was moreover all one, whether she

were there or no. The flame burning in Franziska's heart was a sacred flame, and if it is the same that the kindly Titan once stole from the gods, which is breathed through the whole world, elevating every power of man, her pure spirit kept watch over the silent fire. .

Johannes loved Franziska with deep fervour ; he regarded her rare and genuine nature as the most ordinary thing in life ; he knew not yet of a world in which women could be otherwise. There was really nothing in her which could have surprised him and enchanted him with that power of which it is said that it overcomes gods and men. He liked to look at her, there was something in her that calmed him and made him happy. She was like a star peacefully shining in the twilight, and he had a feeling as if she belonged to him, just as did his hand or his arm, or even his soul ; and when her slender figure moved about the room with light step, when she looked at him calmly and trustingly, when her voice sounded through his heart, he felt as though she were a part of his life, and must remain so and never be otherwise. They never, however, spoke of such matters. There was so much pride and maidenliness in Franziska, so much shyness and awe in acknowledging the grand spirit within her which gradually

filled her whole soul, that when she thought of him, it was as if in that heaven where the believer only deems himself worthy to enter after struggle and victory, suffering and death.

Frau Warning, who saw her daughter always equally quiet and friendly, thought her perfectly untroubled; but when relations, who had met Johannes at her house on several occasions, represented to her that the young teacher might injure Franziska's reputation, and that it was not suitable that he should daily go in and out, she attempted to break off the lessons and the intercourse. Franziska, however, begged her mother so earnestly not to deprive her of a pleasure which must soon come to an end of itself—for Johannes was going to leave Hamburg in the autumn—that she was alarmed, and the light flashed across her. And now the mother turned round in another direction, and in her weakness and love for her daughter she began to devise how all might be made well. In three or four years Johannes would have finished his studies; her numerous relations in Hamburg would then help him forward as a physician. The brother promised, if his business prospered, that he would make a settlement upon her; Franziska would then have a marriage portion; and if the young people liked each other, what was there

against the union? The widow resolved to say and do nothing, but her wishes advanced quicker than time. Johannes' calm uniform behaviour towards Franziska excited in her no anxiety. She saw in it the honourable conduct of a young man without family and property, who would not seek to attract a girl with better prospects than himself.

The mother might just as easily have made a lion into a domestic animal as to imagine that Johannes would demean himself suitably and commend himself to the Herr Senator, her cousin, to the Herr Bürgermeister, her uncle, and to other distinguished personages and dignitaries of the great republic. The widow was even now full of care and anxiety, lest some unhappy chance should bring him into contact with those whose good opinion she would have gladly secured. He could so, proudly give his assent, as if it behoved him already to have an opinion of his own! His manner of expression also ill suited the tone of society; the tone of his voice was too metallic and ringing; and the Herr Pastor could not conceive how his cousin's weak nerves could endure such a full voice. The expression of his countenance also was only too speaking, even when he was silent and said nothing. Johannes, however, thought that in Franziska's family and relations he might

become acquainted with a bit of the world, and he saw nothing in this world than what invited raillery and satire. Frau Warning longed to instruct him in the fashions of good society, but Johannes could not understand the importance of conventional politeness. It seemed to him laughable and contemptible, that *one* human being should require from others that they should transform themselves in an alien mould, so that Yes does not signify yès, nor No, no, but is a warped thing, which we ourselves cannot honestly acknowledge. With impatience he looked forward to the time when he should at length take his departure, and seriously prepare himself for life. He was still much absorbed in his own reflections, and lived in a world of his own ideas and dreams. Franziska loved everything that was good and great; in the richness of his inner life she felt his worth and his importance. Johannes lamented that he would soon have lived twenty-two years without having done or accomplished anything; and Franziska had a feeling as if the world had become more beautiful and better, when he had been there and had spoken to her! In Franziska's presence Johannes indulged his inclinations! From his education with Thorson he had acquired the opinion that the individual could compete with the

power of things; that it was man's duty and honour to seize the wrong by the horns like a monster whom he must overthrow wherever he encounters it. He could not enter into the legend of Faust, although he felt within himself the desires of the world. To take the *devil* as a helper appeared to him quite unintelligible. He felt it behoved him rather to break the power of the devil with human honour and might. The myth of Siegfried, who fights his way through the enemy armed with sharp weapons, in order to rescue his bride from the flames, was more according to his feeling! And thus in enthusiasm and noble fancy the bond of a close connection was woven between the two young people; and their friendship was of so peculiar a kind, that Frau Warning often scarcely knew whether she was right after all with her plans of marriage.

It was a Sunday, in the first week of May, that Frau Warning and her daughter went to Harburg, where Franziska's former nurse lived in a village on the other side of the fir-woods, which picturesquely clothe the hills. For some years she had intended to visit the nurse, now a married woman in comfortable circumstances; and on this day Franziska had urged her to carry out her plan; for in the longing and slight sadness,

which the budding spring had produced in her mind, she had a yearning to be with Johannes in the open air. Hitherto she had only been with him in her mother's gloomy room ; and earth and heaven, now in their perfect beauty, all the blossoms of spring, and all the joy and happiness of nature, seemed to her waiting for him, in order to become more beautiful and blooming in his presence. With great shyness, and with a timid blush, she made the proposal to him to accompany them. Anyone who felt less free than Johannes in her society would have perceived that her fresh vigorous nature had gone, and that in his presence she had become fettered in soul and body, and trembling like a string too tightly drawn.

It was a beautiful excursion on the Elbe. The two young people were quiet and happy. The mother related old family histories, but they heard not much of them ; they looked back on the city, lying there in its might, with its five towers, and the crowded vessels and masts along the green bank ; they passed Altona, standing high on the hill, and then the steamer steered between the low green island on the Elbe where the cattle were already grazing on the rich pasture, and the large peasant-houses stand on the embankment with their thatched roofs and bright



colouring. All seemed beautiful to them. Franziska scarcely understood how it could be so beautiful in the world, and man so happy. The day was very hot, as it is now and then in the north in the early spring, and a storm generally follows. In Harburg they found a waggon which conveyed them to the village, where they were hospitably received at the mill, which stood in a glen of fir-trees by the side of a large pond. Dark trees encircled the pond, and the tender beech and birch glimmered between. Dinner was a merry meal; all were pleased and joyous; the nurse talked; the mother was satisfied. After dinner, Johannes went to the pond and threw himself down on the brink, while the reeds rustled at his feet; the water was bluish and darkly luminous. The mother sat by the miller's wife and played with the children, and Franziska sat with them. Johannes, however, went further, until the path loses itself in the wood, and he felt as he had often done as a boy. He wished to go back to the mill, as the miller's wife had told him to return soon, but the coolness and silence were agreeable to him. It was pleasant lying on the fresh grass, and he closed his eyes and slept in the hot noonday sun. Franziska was sent to look for him, and as she drew near him, she stood bending

over him like Psyche, when she took her lamp timidly to contemplate her happy lot. But fearful lest he should awake, she went away as she came, down the footpath to the mill; and when she was quite out of reach of him, she laid her head in her hands and sobbed within herself, in her great happiness and secret woe!

The day, however, was not to end as happily as it had begun, for Frau Warning and her daughter were obliged to return unaccompanied to Hamburg. Johannes must have lost his way in the wood; in vain the miller had sent his lad to look for him; he was not to be found; and as the steamer did not wait for passengers, he was obliged to remain behind, and then get home again by the last boat. Frau Warning would, on no account, wait so long, after such want of consideration on his side. Johannes had really at first lost his way in the fir woods; he had strolled about, and had come out of the wood in the opposite direction, and before him lay the heath, where a fresh breeze had wafted to him the fragrance of the resinous fir-trees. The odour touched him with peculiar feeling. In the phantasmagoria of his memory it carried him back to the dwelling-room of his grandfather with its floor strewn with fir-spines. He went far into the

wood, walking along in the stillness in a pleasant dreaminess; a blackbird was singing in a deep solitary glen, and he went on till he came to an opening, where another glimpse was caught of the heath. To the left on a small mound in a sandy hollow, stands a gnarled oak, picturesque and solitary, with its ornament of brownish green leaves; and from here the eye ranges over the heath far below, glittering in the sun and catching countless shades with every ray of light. Under the oak, where the sandy path slopes down into the wood, Johannes found several young people resting. They were artists from Hamburg, who had been exploring the beautiful points of the heath, the paths and hollows, which seem cheerless to the traveller. They had made sketches, and one was drawing the tree and the party. The wanderer, whom chance had brought to the spot, was merrily invited to allow himself to appear in the picture. The party had wine with them, they drank, smoked, jested, laughed! With the beautiful tints of light, the song of the birds, with all nature round otherwise so hushed, the fragrance of wild thyme and broom, so dear to the bees, Johannes felt himself agreeably animated. The conversation of the young men, their manners, the open good nature with which

they had associated him with them, were pleasant to him ; but the time had passed at which he ought to have been back at the steamboat, and he wandered back with the artists through the wood. He did not speak, but he felt his heart glowing ; it seemed to him as if he were travelling with a new soul, as if he were leaving the dark wood encompassed by beautiful human forms. From every spring which in this dry region gushes forth to the wanderer's eye as a bright beam of joy, he heard alluring murmurings, joyous laughter, and pleasant voices. The whole wood seemed to him a living thing, as though it were accompanying him with greetings to new unprecedented happiness. His merry companions loitered along till they reached a village lying at the edge of the wood, in the shadow of tall trees. There was dancing there this afternoon ; bowls, half drunken peasants, merry, stamping and turning round on the clay-plastered boards ; and all round on every side, in the horses' mangers and in the empty sheds for the cows, now grazing in the meadows, hung fir-twigs and bunches of green. There was nothing here of the stillness and dreaminess of the wood, but German peasant life and doings, which are as strongly stamped on the Hanoverian side of the Elbe as in Holstein. The artists and

Johannes mingled with the crowds, and had enough to do with eating, drinking, looking on, and dancing. Johannes did not dance; he had never learned, and it was not in his way. The others moved round merrily, and the townsmen had the prettiest girls on their arms for the quick waltz in the tripping polka, causing thereby dissatisfaction and even dispute and noise among the peasants. There was one, however, among the artists who possessed a talent for buffoonery. He produced little as a painter, and for this reason he was accustomed to superintend decorative works; but his colleagues could not do without him in any merry party. He now managed to keep the peasants amused with cock-crowing, the barking of dogs, and other animal sounds which he imitated most naturally, and thus all passed off in peace. It was ten o'clock when Johannes reached home; they had sailed along the broad stream in the cool night; the painters seated themselves on the bowsprit, but Johannes could not leave the evening star which stood wonderfully bright in the sky and large as a sun by night; and he thought how he once, as a boy, had crossed the ocean, and had seen his mother emerge from the waves, as though she were beckoning to him; and it came over him again as

if a figure rose from the peaceful water, and a sweet face smiled towards him ; and when the dream vanished, the evening star was reflected on the waves. The town of Hamburg, with its lamps and lights along the harbour landing-places, the noise and the bustle, the rattle of carriages, the closing of the gates, the crowds in the busy streets—all this brought Johannes back again into reality. He promised better acquaintance with the artists, and he went home through the lighted streets until he reached the gloomy district in which he lived.

The maid came sullenly from her bed to open to him when he rang. There was still a light in Franziska's room. He sent to enquire whether he might come ; not to excuse himself for having lost his way, of that he never thought ; but that he had a yearning and longing after Franziska. It seemed to him as if he must hear her voice and say many things to her. But Frau Warning begged to wish him good night, adding, that this was not a time to receive visits.

A strange and agitated night followed this day as regards both the young people. For the first time in her life Franziska had been impatient that evening with her mother, and even unkind. She had defended Johannes, and it had provoked her

that her mother was seriously angry with him. Her cheeks were crimson, and shame dried up her tears when her mother at length said that she wished nothing more ardently than that she should banish from her thoughts a man who did not trouble himself ordinarily about her; and the mother told her what she had wished and planned, and how she could not endure to see her child sad; and Franziska's consolatory words lay like a gentle hand upon the anxious heart.

She told her mother that she was thankful to her, but that she must now help in not proclaiming her secret before the world. Johannes had a path before him which his mind had bid him take, and in which she could not accompany him. Her own nature had revealed to her this. She knew that a man must remain alone with his genius, if he has one, until he arrives at the resting-point, where he gathers round him in joy and peace those whom he holds dear. And the widow listened without rightly understanding; only one thing was sure, and that was that Franziska knew what was right; and she promised not to give Johannes notice to quit as she had suddenly resolved to do, but to let him remain in the house until he left the town, and not to associate him any longer with her daughter in her thoughts;

for dearly as Franziska loved him, she said she would rather die and never see him again, than that there should be any attempt to bring about a matter which was not the result of his free choice. Franziska's unfortunate engagement had stolen away her ingenuousness, and had matured her experience, and her mother was glad that she had spoken with her daughter. She had, moreover, a belief that marriages are made in heaven, and that man may twist and turn as he will, it is after all just as it should be.

All was still in Frau Warning's room, and the mother was asleep. Franziska was glad that she had restored peace again; but in the night her music reached Johannes' ear, in such agitated and passionately plaintive fantasias, that he felt as if he must go down to her. For the first time in this evening her image was in his dreams with peculiar grace. The room felt too narrow to him; he had the latch of the door in his hand; it seemed to him as if he must see Franziska, hold her hands, sit down by her side; he had an unutterable longing—to tell her—what would he tell her? His heart was full of undefined feelings; then he remembered that he did not dare to go to her. Her music suddenly ceased, the glimmer which had fallen from her light upon the wall of the



opposite house was extinguished. Johannes sat down to read, and turned over the leaves of a folio which had occupied him the day before. The old spirit of *work* had yesterday been again aroused in him; this evening it was of no avail to urge it. It was oppressive in the room. He threw up the window, compelled himself to read, endeavoured and reflected to cast light upon some dark passage; and despairing of his ability to do so, sat at the table with his head resting on his hands, allowing his mind to wander in dreams, which better suited the events of the day than the labours of thought had done. Suddenly his attention was drawn to a crackling and nibbling at the head of his bed: there were mice or rats in his room, which had been often annoying to him in the stillness of the night; the rustling was repeated, the gnawing was unceasing. Johannes threw a book in the direction of the sound; all was still, but it did not last long; there was a nibbling noise, as if something hard were being bitten. It occurred to Johannes, all at once, that just there the picture was standing which his father had painted. He sprang up; he had hitherto never removed the cloth, because his mother had placed it round the roll. The remembrance of his dying father painting the picture—the

scene as he lay there, when his mother drew him to the bedside saying, 'Thy father sleeps,' her motionless look when he was dead—all at once the whole scene rose vividly before him.

The rat was really at the picture. The animal had not time to escape; there he sat, looking at him with timid evil eyes, and with its disagreeable pointed face. Johannes tore open the roll, the lower end of which the creature had gnawed. The rat glided into its hole. Johannes carried the picture to his lamp, and took his penknife to cut the threads with which the linen was sewn. His mother had sewn it strongly; the stitches had held for more than ten years. At length he had finished the task, and the painting unrolled itself before his eyes. At the lower edge the linen was fastened by small nails to a round stick, after the fashion of a blind, so that the weight might hold down the picture; at the extreme edge were a couple of packthread loops, likewise fastened by nails to a narrow ledge of wood, which held up the picture on this side. In this way the schoolmaster had been wont to hang his paintings against the walls of his room, when he could not purchase frames for them. The picture looked as if a misty veil were spread over it; on the left foot of the figure the rat had bitten a hole, which struck his eye as

disagreeably black. Johannes passe a white cloth lightly over the painting ; the colours were in wonderful preservation. He looked at the figure and lovely countenance with astonishment ; he allowed the light from his lamp to fall on the picture on every side ; then he found there was just room for it on the wall ; two of the nails on which his clothes hung seemed to have been knocked in on purpose, and the Eve stood opposite his bed ! He lay down and soon fell asleep, but he woke again wondering, when the great silver repeater which he had from his grandfather struck at his touch only half-past twelve. He had not gone to bed till after twelve ; it seemed to him as if years had elapsed since then ; as if he had been far away ; he tried to reflect on all that he had experienced in his dream, but he could not recover it ; it only lay within him as the cloudy remembrance of a past event. He had forgotten to extinguish his light, and it now flared up in going out, and the glow fell on the picture, in which his father had given utterance to the fervour and long-repressed ardour, of his feelings. The light went out, and Johannes no longer saw the picture, but it stood with luminous distinctness before his mind. It was as if it were reflected in his soul. With in-

describable grace the figure was bending down towards a crystal stream, and drawing water in the hollow of her hand, and throwing it splashingly down ; her head, with its sweet innocent eyes, was upraised ; and in the sky stood the evening star, like a revelation of beauty ; a deep silence was over all nature. Johannes fell asleep with a sense of bliss which seemed breathed around him ; and on the following morning, when he woke in the bright sunshine, his first glance fell again on the picture. He went out earlier than usual ; he felt sadly wild and solitary ; an almost angry unrest came over him. On the way it occurred to him that he must see Franziska, in order to show her the picture.

He did not find her alone with her mother. Frau Warning greeted him with dignified friendliness, as she had promised Franziska, and she had prevailed upon herself to mention nothing of what occurred yesterday. Franziska rose to meet him, and led him to a gentleman sitting on the sofa, whose hand she seized with animation and kissed, and whom she introduced as Herr Klaren, her dear and beloved master. Johannes had often heard her speak of him, and had looked forward to the pleasure of knowing him. Klaren had been in Italy during the winter, and had

only returned the day before. He was a man of about fifty years of age, with a fine intelligent countenance, although with the too large head and long chin peculiar to the deformed, and with a poor crooked figure. He looked at Johannes with a keen expression, and greeted him pleasantly, smiling ironically as he offered him a pinch of snuff.

‘I know you already, Herr Johannes,’ he said. ‘Your mathematical master, who regrets that he sees you no longer, mentioned you to me some years ago, and now my little pupil has done so. Why did you not stick to mathematics?’

Johannes blushed.

‘I understand,’ said the old man, ‘the science of form and number. Abstract calculation is not fit for people of your sort.’ And he smiled at Johannes, but this time without irony; and he held Franziska’s hand in his own, and looked into her face with a hearty expression of kindness.

‘Yes,’ said Johannes, ‘art lives and moves in the breath of beauty. She forms whatever is true and enduring; all else is not worth the trouble. This I have learned since yesterday. I have lost much time.’

‘I have also a few dealings with art,’ said the old man. ‘By profession I am a musician.’

‘My father was a painter,’ interrupted Johannes ; by profession he was a schoolmaster. I intend to be a physician, but I have not yet rightly begun.’

‘Well,’ said Klaren, ‘I am not only by profession a musician, but one by heart also, and my friend here is so with heart and soul. I belong somewhat to the class of men who, like the god Apollo on the Mount of the Muses, like to gather round them the famous nine sisters. In so doing, however, there is not much to be reaped by a child of man. How then, my friend, did your father learn and practise painting, being by profession a schoolmaster?’

Johannes now related his father’s history. It came vividly before his mind, and he told what he knew of the picture. The end was that the old man hobbled up the stairs with him. He went with difficulty, leaning on a great stick with a heavy silver head, which he always held in his hand, and which when he sat down he placed before him, so that his fine countenance, with its deep-seated eyes, thin brown hair, and intelligently smiling mouth, was reflected in it.

Frau Warning, who that very morning had endured some agitation of mind respecting the naked figure, of which her servant had told her, which

Johannes had imprudently suspended against the wall, signed Franziska with her eyes that she was not to go up also, although Johannes had requested her to do so. Frau Warning had ordered a sheet to be hung over the picture, so that it looked like a ghost, when Johannes, with his new acquaintance, entered the room. Klaren made him take the picture from the wall, and managed, as well as he was able, by clearing the table and placing a chair upon it, to form an easel, and on this he placed it in the right light at the window. Klaren was an authority as a critic in matters of taste. There were in the town a few rich people who possessed more vanity and pretension than any true knowledge of art. Klaren was often cleverly perfidious and maliciously witty with his patrons when they sought his advice, for he delighted in deceiving the dilettanteism which gives vitiated tendency to taste in matters of art, but always asserts itself in its foolish assumption. Whenever he had to do with artists, he was inexorable with regard to all mannerism, sentimentalism, or, as he was wont to express it, any 'lascivious' tendency. In this he had his prejudices and fancies; but his understanding and delicate feeling were incorruptible.

He looked at the picture from every point of

view. 'What talent and what capacity!' he said at length. 'If *that* man could but have learned, and have had models, like thousands of others, who accomplish nothing, with all their intentions and noble ideas! How clever and beautiful is the outline; it is true our angular German character is not to be mistaken; but what a countenance and smile! The eyes are full of light and life! And where could the man have so learned the mixing of colours, that the thing has been preserved without varnish all this long time?'

'Sweet, holy Nature,' muttered the old man to himself; 'but it is of no use for Nature thus to honour with her gifts, unless Fortune comes forward also. What a pity for this painter that the man should never have come forward! That, in order to be free from the number of earthly cares and duties, he knew of no other remedy than to depart with death!' And Klaren shook his head, and again stood before the picture, and said: 'It is certain that Nature is ever scattering seeds, but often in hidden corners, so that a man works with great powers and brings wild flowers to light. This wild flower has a sweet fragrance,' he added; 'by culture it would have become a genuine work of art.'

The old man's eulogium increased the value of



the picture in Johannes' sight. At length they went away together, Johannes taking the picture with him. They had resolved to take it to a painter whom Klaren knew, that he might varnish it and put it into order. This man, also, was full of surprise at the work.

'You could sell this remarkable picture at a high price,' said Klaren to Johannes, 'if the great art judge sees it. We will let him light upon it somewhere. He will give it out under the name of a master of the old German or early Italian school, to whom he will attribute it. He will ask me whose I consider it to be, and will persist in his opinion whatever I may say. He will not let the picture go; you can always ask a good price for it.'

Johannes said that the Eve painting was of more value to him than all the money which might be offered him for it.

The old man looked at him with pleasure, and told him that in his place he would not part with it.

That very day, however, Johannes was to learn what money means, and how necessary it is to the enjoyment of life. Klaren invited Johannes to dine with him, and proposed, as his housekeeper had had no intimation of it, that they should go

to a restaurant; for he was an epicure, and he liked to have everything of the best, and especially a good glass of wine. Johannes had never so eaten and drunk before. He felt, in the elegant apartment, bright with mirrors and flowers, and enjoying his luxurious repast, like one coming from Greenland into some Italian clime, and his vital powers relaxed as in a tepid bath. He was, however, proud and self-conscious, and restrained himself from indulging his inclinations. The refined and ironical host observed him, and was well pleased to have an attentive but not too obtrusive an auditor and guest. It was evening when the meal was over, and the old man took pleasure in his young companion the more clearly and steadfastly the latter met his gaze, and he had already ranked him among the number of those whose society he enjoyed. He had, however, lapsed into an excited eccentric tone of feeling in the company of his new acquaintance. Klaren had had a hard childhood; favour and patronage had assigned him an oppressed position, and the early mortifications of an extremely tender feeling could be heard like some harsh discord ringing through the happiness and gifts which life had subsequently bestowed upon him. In his youth, when he was a poor

musician, he had played in the orchestra at Berlin. Hoffmann and his circle had brought him forward, and made his gifted violin playing appreciated. He had subsequently settled in Hamburg, and in course of time had arrived at importance in this his native city. He now took pleasure in indulging in eccentricity, perhaps on account of his crooked person. He lived in a dilapidated house, in a court-yard in the former cathedral square—the very same in which he had dwelt as a child—although he had long ceased to be poor, and his rooms were furnished with great care and refinement. For a short time Klaren had been unhappily married to a woman who had brought him considerable property. This relation, which death had terminated, had left behind a deep feeling of ill-humour. He now became the favourite of all young girls, and he was immoderately honoured by their mothers. He himself, as well his housekeeper—who was accustomed to go out, in all seasons, in a large white batiste hat, and who quarrelled with the market women about every shilling and about the best morsels for her master—were equally famous personages among the novelty seekers of the district. Klaren was a musician through and through. For a long time he had given up playing in concerts, and when he

appeared in public it was generally to superintend the performance of some oratorio or classical work. He gave music lessons, but at such a high price that the daughters of the richest families esteemed it a privilege to be allowed to receive instruction from him.

Wherever he found no music and no talent for the art, he took no pleasure in the lessons, and dissuaded his pupils against the loss of time. He gave, however, a good deal of instruction gratis, and Franziska was his favourite of all such pupils. Klaren was considerably esteemed in society; people were happy when he condescended to appear in a salon. There was at that time in Hamburg a small circle of witty epicureans who would make no party without him, and here he was frequently seen. Men said that his nature was *haut goût* of the most refined kind. There was a piquant carelessness, a fine point and sharpness in his conversation; those who appreciated the piquancy could not do without it; and his taste in every branch of art, his knowledge, as well as his appreciation of the refined enjoyments of life, made him a choice member of society.

Among the peculiarities which he delighted in preserving, was the fact that he now and then played the violin for dancing in a ball-room in the

suburb of Saint Pauli, as he had done in beginning his career as a poor boy; and in so doing an indescribable and carnival feeling would come over him. All that was strange and fabulous, all the wild mirth and inconceivable folly, which seems to have dwelt from eternity in the human mind, in opposition to all sober judgment and reason, appeared moving before his eyes, and in his imagination, in the dances of the sailors and maidens, and of the company assembled at Saint Pauli.

Klaren proposed this evening to Johannes to go with him to Saint Pauli, where he intended once more to play the violin. They therefore went together to his house, where the housekeeper, grumbling and scolding, fetched the instrument for her master. She brought with it besides a coat, which he took upon his arm, hiding the violin-case beneath it. And the housekeeper looked after him as he walked away with Johannes, and made remarks on the attire of the new acquaintance, which really was always of a kind unsuited to the refined world, and far more to the place where he was to hear his wonderful acquaintance play the violin, and where soon everything was jumbled in confusion, and full of buzzing roar and riot, like a witches' sabbath. The music regulated the

dance in the most incredible measure. Klaren, however, did not long continue playing ; he lost the fancy for it ; and Johannes did not return home with him. The musician was grave and sad, as if exhausted and depressed with the effort he had made, and he wished to be alone. But he pressed Johannes' hand, and told him he should grow fond of him, perhaps as fond as he was of Franziska, and he invited him to visit him frequently.

It was past twelve o'clock. Johannes, nevertheless, again returned to the street, for he had no house key, and his ringing on the previous evening had thrown every one into commotion. When he went home on the following morning, the curtains were already drawn up in the ladies' apartments, and Frau Warning had asked her daughter, not without some anxiety, what in all the world could have become of Johannes?

## CHAPTER III.

## ASPIRATIONS.

‘Who has ever gazed upon the beautiful?’

Three months had elapsed. What are three months in the ordinary course of time? Without event, without action, without having wrought anything within us, they pass by; but they may also be so full of purport, so crowded with life’s experiences, that we are astonished how man is able to grasp and endure, to consume and digest it all!

Johannes had advanced a long way in a short time. It was a most beautiful spring; and a summer, such as there had not been in Hamburg for years, brightened up the dark by-streets with a succession of sunny days. Johannes was sensible of keen enjoyment without. The passion which had filled his father—and which had killed him in its deep longing, in the effort to see before him as a picture the beautiful which was within him—now burst forth in Johannes, and urged him out into life. He needed not to look into the

magic mirror, or to bathe in the waters of rejuvenescence, in order to purify himself from the 'dust of knowledge.' He had sought life in knowledge, and he knew now that it was glowing within him in the central point of his nature! The world now stood before him, and it urged him forwards with all his powers. Would he land or suffer shipwreck? He cared not, so long as he came forth into the open sea—into the great, wide, and deep ocean, that flows round everything.

It was the time of the poetical reaction in Germany. Those who lived through this period in their youth know how the longing for liberty glowed in the minds of men; how a generation, striving upwards during the long repose of those days, entertained the idea of Germany's political revival as the pole-star of their hopes. The year 1830 had electrified Europe, and the after-effect of the blow rested in the minds of men. They looked old prejudices in the face, and felt that old traditions were giving way. The freedom which belongs to mankind was to renew the order of things and the rights of society; and indignation at broken promises, and rights withheld, agitated all minds. There were still the stirrings of a romantic view of things in the feeling of a youth devoting itself to the defence of freedom of thought; but the mind



of the critic was already at work, in order to direct the eye and the feeling of the age to truth and reality.

Johannes' entrance into the world occurred at this time. The society in which Klaren delighted suited him not ; the too defined savour of intellectual banqueting was only adapted to a life already satiated. The old patron knew this, and he made Johannes acquainted with a man—a journalist, and a man of importance—who was a central point for critics of another kind. Here there were people of free tendencies, who interested themselves in the questions of the time, daily giving forth to the world sparks from their mind, which the press, in spite of the censure which it had to meet in the contest, employed for the dissemination of ideas, and which many a good citizen regarded at that time as the serpent's seed of evil. Johannes was soon a welcome guest among the young men, who lived in an easy indifferent manner after their own fashion, to the vexation of the 'old gentlemen,' as the whole band of young and old students were styled, who are anxious about their kitchen garden when the storm rages, and when the gods descend in thunder and lightning. There was nothing low, narrow, or common in this circle, in which talents of various kinds and tendencies

met together. While one, with fiery bombast and noble warmth of eloquence, made poems—the strain of which found sympathy at the time, but which have long disappeared, and deserved no better lot—others were like lights that flare up, burn brightly, flame, and soon die out. There were also men in the circle of deep and lasting importance, and a republican spirit and revolutionary feeling gave a tone to the whole.

In this spirit the questions of the time were discussed. Wit and raillery came forward to abuse empty unreality; the hollow lie was encountered with intolerant violence. Whatever men of importance came to Hamburg at this time—poets and scholars, writers and politicians, any who visited the town in passing—gladly joined the circle which, every evening, was wont to meet in the Pavillon on the Jungfern path.

Johannes could only be a modest member of it. He lived away, however, in his rapidly-unfolding and long-restrained youth; took and gave again with quick understanding and feeling, and followed his inclinations with the certainty of a mind which pressed forward with open breast, accessible both to friend and foe. With a weaker will, he might easily have lost himself as in a maze. That capability, however, of inward self restraint

which nature had bestowed upon him as a counter-balance to the impulsive passion of his character, was of use to him; the power that was to govern him must be within himself.

‘Are there twelve hours in the day, and as many in the night, and what happens in them? What profit do they bring us? How many have we flung and dreamed away? What was worth the trouble of doing?’ *This* he felt: the power that had kept him wakeful over his books, which had dreamed and yearned within him, was now bursting forth like sunshine and vital flame over all that he was and did.

It is not in our province to relate where and how Johannes lived in that free and happy time, nor can we record of what kind were his deviations from the path of soberness into the groves and meadows of pleasure, into the classical Walpurgis night, or even among Auerbach’s cellar guests. The pen which can sketch all this does not belong to us. We must, moreover, to our regret, confess that he could conscientiously reconcile himself to sell the picture which his father had painted. The art judge, of whom Klaren had said that if once put on the track he would buy the picture as a remarkable discovery, had become the possessor of it for a suitable sum. Klaren had not

thought it wrong to let the infatuation alone, which was a fixed idea, and could not be shaken by his narration of what he knew of the picture.

‘Time will prove,’ Klaren said to Johannes; ‘the follies of self-estimation are not to be otherwise reached. It is at any rate an interesting picture. He is ready to pay, and your father’s picture will stand in worthy company; for besides much rubbish, the possessor of the gallery in which it is to be exhibited has many good things.’

Johannes consoled himself over the loss of the picture. The money was of use to him, for he was already paying high interest for money advanced upon his future property. His old friend considered this unjustifiable, and never desisted from warning him not to run himself aground, and afterwards be plunged into perplexity. ‘He would not like, surely, at the university, to creep away into a hole like a snail of erudition, and receive his board for nothing.’ So Johannes gradually sold his possessions. One thing went after another: the collection of books he had himself made, and those which his grandfather had left behind him. He had read the books, he knew their contents; he would have disposed of an ancestral document a hundred years old, had he had one, to exchange living life for the dead

possession. And that Eve painting, his father's ideal of beauty! Did he not bear it within him? Was it not impelling him with incessant longing out into the world? Surely he *possessed* it still, when he set forth to pass over the agitated waters, to land on the coasts and to dive in the depths where the original of such beauty dwelt; when the glorious idea of so much loveliness and grace, when the image of noble soul-breathing beauty rose before him. It was in his very nature; it stood like a star on his sky, shining ever before him, whether he strode over misty paths or over charming tracts and fair meadows. The picture was *his*—he knew how truly he possessed it. And what need had he of books? The present hour was more to him; the present moment in which he felt and lived was everything.

So far as he was himself concerned, Johannes maintained his old relations with Franziska. He came to the lessons of an evening, only no longer so regularly as formerly; and alas! how often she expected him in vain. Instead of northern poetry and mythology, and the great works of the classic poets, he now read Heine and Byron; read them with a feeling and passionately agitated voice, and with a tender and fine expression, so that her heart trembled and ached, exulted and desponded. Occasionally also he now produced

poems of his own. One day he read aloud to her some verses, of which we subjoin the following :—

The queen passed down the sunlit stream,  
 As it sparkled in the glow,  
 The golden bark was mirrored plain  
 In the clear flood below.  
 The sails by Cupid's hands were spread,  
 And lovely nymphs the rudder led.  
 Upon the shore the Emperor stood,  
 And watched her sailing past;  
 And he, who half a world could own,  
 Who sat upon a princely throne,  
 Which crime, and fame and pride made fast,—  
 He felt that all was naught the while,  
 And valueless by beauty's smile.

The hall on marble columns rose,  
 The queen sat on the throne;  
 The mystic charm passed through the air,  
 And the great game went on.  
 The great game played by human heart  
 Where life and destiny form a part.  
 The queen went with him to the chase,  
 And hurled the javelin with skill,  
 And laughed because he seemed to think,  
 A beast was all she meant to kill.  
 The badge of victory was raised,  
 But he was not the victor praised,—  
 He would have given the world away  
 For beauty's smile that near him lay.

And *each* has got a world to give,  
 As Antony had of old;  
 He who this song has writ well knows  
 He is cast in grander mould.  
 His wealth exceeds Marc Antony's,  
 For a *pearl*, that nought can pay,  
 His youth, his hope, his happiness,  
 He in the goblet lay,  
 That his queen might quaff the drink divine,  
 And feel the ardent glow of wine.

We write things of the kind. Poetry is the language of some of us. Johannes jotted down his thoughts on paper, and the journal accepted them as stop-gaps. He, however, also wrote articles which were moderately paid, and Franziska lived on the articles as on sentences of Sibylline wisdom, even against her own taste and better convictions. Never was the expression of youthfully presumptuous ideas, never were passionately excited feelings more unconstrainedly permitted as the right of the free individual, than in the circle in which Johannes at that time lived. But there was *power* in it, and *this* was the attraction.

Frau Warning had never read Plutarch. Johannes' poem did not please her; she would, moreover, have rather not kept the journal, which she found ostentatious and insignificant. Franziska, however, listened to Johannes, deeply touched, sad and embarrassed. There was too much of passion and sunlight! Why did not her countenance glow, illuminated with similar splendour? And even if she would cast all the pearls of her beautiful life into the goblet, the drink which she could offer would be pure clear water, not wine, intoxicating in fire and ardour! Franziska was acute; she understood everything with the instinct

of the heart. Pride and too profound a love made her reserved, and obscured her clear nature; the need for happiness was repressed in her heart; the struggle had begun. She would rather have died than shown him her heart; and Johannes understood her not, and found her altered to her disadvantage.

Frau Warning, however, reckoned the days till he was to leave. She had not had the power to break off the intercourse violently and to dismiss Johannes, as she ought to have done, when he no longer came home regularly, sleeping sometimes far into the day, and even demanding a latch-key to go out and in! She thought the time would pass quickly, and Franziska wished that he should remain. The relatives, who had long been annoyed that Johannes should have ingratiated himself with the unsuspecting widow, brought her stories respecting him, with all the exaggeration possible. The circle in which he lived justified any scandal, and the mother stifled her sighs and was silent, for Franziska allowed nothing to be said against Johannes. She would rather have subverted the whole order of things, and have seen day like night, than have confessed that Johannes abandoned himself to the



enjoyment of the moment without an object and a higher purpose

‘He has no friends, no family, he has got into bad society,’ lamented the mother. Franziska, however, thought: ‘Ah, my good mother, thou knowest not how such gold must be cast into the fire that it may be purified.’

In Franziska’s nature it was a fault that she imputed even to the devil a pair of white angels’ wings, for she believed that it was only the longing after heaven, from which his power-aspiring mind had expelled him, that drove him to tempt and torment human beings.

Franziska had no fears for her loved one. Where should he live than among men, who were too free, too good, and too proud for the narrow-hearted restrictions of ordinary natures! The capacity for all that was good and beautiful lay within him! how should she not be happy? Thus she knew him, and *thus* he belonged to her.

Frau Warning, however, counted the days till September, when he should be of age; a letter from his guardians had already arrived. She penetrated not into Franziska’s heart; it was enough for her that her daughter grew more serious and more reserved towards herself. It

was as if a secret grief were gnawing at her life. Klaren allowed her now to come daily to him, but she made less progress in music than formerly.

‘It will be otherwise, in time,’ he thought; and he had a pleasure in thinking that his worthy pupil would soon belong to him more, perhaps entirely, when the magic power that lay in music should dawn upon her. Why should she give herself to a man who felt for her after all nothing but the selfishness of an exacting and still immature affection? Klaren congratulated himself in having assisted in introducing Johannes to the circle to which he belonged, so that his constant intercourse with Franziska had been interrupted; and he himself was thus spared seeing her the betrothed of a man unripe both in culture and experience. Whoever knows the misery which the delusions of feeling bring upon finer natures, will think it desirable for Franziska that she should take the path which her old friend was contemplating for her.

Might it not be possible, he thought, for a human being now and then to have reason enough to arrive at repose and perfection in the beautiful world of art?

*BOOK THE FOURTH.*

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*CHAPTER I.**THE FOUNDLING.*

THE time was near at which Johannes was to set out for the university. He was of age, and in a few weeks he was to go to Göttingen.. The smith of Oevenum was in Hamburg, and wished to settle his accounts as guardian. Johannes had had pleasure in his thoroughly honest relative, original as he was in his way. They had wandered through the town, to and fro through the streets, up the noisy stone path, through the Altona gate on the Hamburg hill, where booths, carousel, and foreign animals and fruits and various things, had attracted the gaze of the Föhringer. The smith had been two days in Hamburg, and the image of the busy world and its strangely heterogeneous elements had so overwhelmed him that it followed him even in sleep, and his dreams were full of a chaos of animal and human forms. From a clod of earth lying before him a fearful

winged figure had emerged, and had seated itself on his shoulder. His imagination, which had slumbered all his life like the marmots in the winter, had been roused to unprecedented effort after the impressions of a restless day, and when he woke in the morning, he looked significantly at his nephew and commended him in fervent prayer to God, for he thought on the poor Goneril who had been drowned in the sea; and that Johannes, in spite of the money which he had, was after all an orphan, rejected by his grandfather; and he, his guardian, could regulate nothing, but must leave him here in this city of destruction, which had even disturbed his own repose so much that he felt a desire for his workshop with Frau Keyke, and the accustomed life of work on workdays and of rest on Sundays.

Johannes had accompanied his uncle to the wharf, the narrow steps of which he descended into the wherry which was to take him on board the Blankeneser; from thence he was to go by Dagebühl to Föhr. The evening was unusually hot; the air was sultry and oppressive, and a storm seemed threatening. Although it was already the first week in September, a long drought had made everything hot and dry, so

that the earth seemed as if cracking and languishing for refreshment and coolness.

Johannes had loitered down to the place where the steamers lay. The Elbe in the evening glow, the forest of masts in the harbour, the crowds on the landing-places, presented an animated picture. He stood, impeded by the throng, for a steamer had just arrived full of passengers.

A shooting-feast had been held at Harburg, and the pleasure-loving middle class as well as the lower order in Hamburg, are always ready to go wherever there is merry-making in the neighbourhood.

Several people got out, and the crowds pushed and pressed on the landing bridge. It had meanwhile grown almost dark. The storm had approached; it was thundering softly in the distance. From the tower of St. Michael it just struck nine o'clock.

Among the last to leave the steamboat, a young girl came on shore. She was badly dressed. Over a cotton petticoat of a dark colour she wore a mantle of the same humble material, with a large collar, edged with a frill, such as Hanoverian women were wont to put on when they went out. She had drawn the collar over her head, and had pinned it under her chin, so

that scarcely anything was to be seen of her face.

Johannes was struck by the bearing and by the peculiar walk of the girl. She was delicately and slenderly formed ; there was a charming softness and grace in her movements. He looked after her, and stood still as he saw her take a lighted path, where the lamp-lighter had just finished his work. She took off her mantle, drew a white handkerchief from the little bundle which she carried, and fastened it round her head. There she stood, with her bad dress and beautiful figure, drew a paper from her pocket, and held it to the light, as if she wished to read it. She seemed, however, to accomplish this with difficulty, and she looked about her with some perplexity. In the crowd, where each was occupied with himself, no one paid attention to her, and Johannes advanced towards her.

His heart beat—the vision pierced him to the quick—when the girl turned her face to him. Had the Venus of Milo descended from her pedestal and bent towards him with the power and grace of her divine being, he would scarcely have felt as he did in the presence of this maiden.

She seemed to heed him not, but with an air of

indifference slightly raised her shoulders, when he asked if she were a stranger and perhaps did not know the way ?

She had turned to a drosky driver and had told him to drive her to the Beckergang ; she seemed at length to have deciphered the address. The coachman was just bringing his drosky up, when she asked what he required for the drive, and reckoning the contents of her small purse, she turned away, and said, ' Thank you, I will find my way on foot.'

The coachman thought her legs would carry the girl very well, and her packet was not heavy ; and, moreover, he was not inclined to drive her for nothing. The girl again shrugged her shoulders a little, and proceeded down the quay, every now and then looking round at the tall houses.

Johannes followed her, inwardly blessing the darkness, and that no one had remarked her. A few large rain drops fell, and the storm threatened to break overhead. The girl had again put on her mantle and concealed her face, as the pearl does its rare lustre within the ugliest shell ; her beauty, when she showed herself, he thought, would have shone like a carbuncle through the darkest night. He had never lived, never felt, until this moment, and his heart stood almost still :

he felt the blood flowing and glowing through his veins, when, at the end of the quay, she paused, not knowing where to go in the gloomy labyrinth of streets in the strange city. His voice failed him. Uncertain whether this queen of grace and beauty would do him such a favour, he again stood beside her, and said that as he knew the way, he would conduct her ; that she must let him carry her bundle ; and he begged her to tell him the name of the people to whom she wished to go.

The girl examined him from head to foot with her calm eye.

‘ For aught I care,’ she said ; ‘ if the gentleman has nothing better to do ;’ and she gave him her parcel to carry.

On the way she had already told him her story. She was coming from a Roman Catholic village in the neighbourhood of Osnabrück, and she had travelled by diligence as far as Harburg. She had lived as a child on an island off the East Friesland coast, and her grandmother was now dead. She had been with the priest, whose housekeeper had given her a scanty allowance, and she was now coming to Hamburg to look for a place of service. An aunt of hers, of whom she had before known nothing, had written to a woman in the village, who had procured many a girl a good place, and



she was now on her way to her. To Johannes the story was interesting, from the lips that related it. Homer and Sophocles, Goethe and Shakspeare, appeared for the moment void and dead to him, compared with the lively interest that beamed from her eyes. The palace of the Fata Morgana was dim and poor by the side of the glow which met him from the lantern carried in the hands of an old Megæra, for he caught a glimpse of the beautiful face, now smiling towards him, grateful for his trouble, and making him mute, confused, and speechlessly happy.

The woman was repulsive in aspect, with a grinning smile and piercing eyes : two teeth, which stood out like tusks from the decayed mouth, gave her the appearance of a beast of prey, whom the young girl met with kisses, receiving in return bows and grinning civility, and equivocal deference.

He went away sorrowful ; he looked round the cleaned room, with the chamber opening out of it, in which his treasure—the wealth and glory of his life, the jewel of creation—was to sleep under the protection of the old dragon ! He would have liked to place around her, as watch and body guard, thousands and thousands of spirits with drawn swords brightly flaming, that they might glitter and shine over her. He went the old paths a new man ;

and soon he knew but of one way ; every street and path, however circuitous, tended only to the one blessed goal.

She had already looked about for a place of service, this beautiful Maria—the old woman called her Molly—but it was necessary in the first place to attend to her clothes ; and the old woman, who groaned and sighed because the girl had nothing at all, allowed Johannes to give her all that she required. Maria looked out for him, the old woman scolded, but there the matter rested. Johannes had still some of the money which he had received for the Eve picture of his father ; his small property was in the bank at Copenhagen, and could not be touched till the following month.

‘ Poor father,’ he thought, ‘ thou didst die because the vision of beauty burned within thy soul. To create it, to fashion it, to see it but once with thy bodily eye ; for this thou hadst to die. And for thy son, has all-powerful nature laboured and employed her finest and highest powers to combine so many marvels of form, colour, and light into the most perfect and exquisite being ! It lives and blooms, it breathes and feels, it smiles and loves in his arms ! Men travel over sea and land, and find it not ! Merit, wisdom, virtue, valour, receive it not as a reward ; and

upon me, deserving nothing and striving for nothing it is vouchsafed—a free, high, and pure happiness! The blessed gods have descended to me in the fulness of their goodness, and have given me the highest blessing which they can devise in their divine bliss, namely, a woman, the very personification of beauty and goodness!’

The malicious old aunt could do nothing—such a love and passion had never come before her—much as she cursed the fate which had brought this man across Maria’s path.

Johannes had only known her for three weeks, when he was already settled in a dwelling whither she retired with him. Maria had gone without asking her aunt; and the old woman would not leave her alone, and went in and out of the dwelling, which was in a busy street. Furniture was bought, more than was necessary; the old woman always knew what was wanting, and how to arrange everything. Maria liked her to wait on her, and listened as she talked. The old woman was to her what the puppet-player and story-teller is to the harem women, who, for want of the world lying outside, affords pastime in fables and fairy tales when the lord is absent; and Johannes was for some time satisfied with the ignoble adjunct. No one else ever came to the house. He was glad to con-

ceal his happiness from the world, and his friends knew nothing of Maria. Whatever they might think as to his not leaving Hamburg according to his intention, or as to his rare visits—and when he did come, as to his haste to go—he did not say a word of that which now constituted his life. He might just as well have spoken of his consciousness of God, of his feelings, and of other sacred things, which no man unnecessarily talks of, as of her.

Nevertheless, rich and happy as he felt, he had not quitted the house in which he had lived so long without a pang. He felt, however, that he could now no longer see Franziska; he expressed serious and profound thanks and respect in the letter which he wrote to the mother, as he was leaving her house sooner than had been agreed; and Frau Warning, who had heard somewhat of the unhappy and inexcusable conduct of the young man, had sent his possessions after him, and at the same time had expressed her regret that she and her daughter could no longer be at home to him.

Days, weeks, and months had passed away, as in an intoxicating ecstasy of happiness! The money which his grandfather had settled on him was now his; no one could interfere. Johannes had already borrowed upon high interest before it came into his hands, and had raised all that he had

required. Maria had needed this and that, and everything became her so well ! The old woman bought, praised, and flattered the giver, defrauded and deceived, as though she wished to ruin him as quickly as possible. Johannes threw the money away without regarding it ; it was enough for him if Maria smiled and was pleased. He drove with her into the country in the bright fresh October days. The more solitary was the world, the more beautiful was it to them both. Why should he think beyond the happiness of the hour ?

Yet a time was soon approaching when, according to the disposition of his nature, he ought to have proposed marriage, even if such a step had not been from the beginning of all things the necessary result of an honourable feeling. He would have given away a world for Maria's sake had he had one, just as indifferently as he had staked to her himself, and his actions and being. But what agitated his heart was no intoxicating delusion which vents itself in small things ; he had never yet spoken with Maria of fidelity, and he demanded none from her. His feelings were eternal, true, imperishable ; this he placed before her, and thus everything was settled between them and complete for all time. It must, however, have been evident to him that his little

property would soon decline ; that he must reform, and labour, and work and care, and he set about it with the energy which on every necessary occasion, so soon as he was conscious ' this is right and it must be,' restrained him or impelled him forwards. In the first place it was necessary to procure what they required for maintenance, so that Maria might be happy, and might smile upon him, and might take pleasure in many small things as he did in her. It never occurred to him that he was sacrificing his future ; he had never had in view a goal of civil ambition ; honour, right, and duty were evolved from his own innermost heart. While he was happy, staking his future for the sake of a dear human being, he imagined himself right in his own eyes and in those of all the world. He again took trouble in lessons, his journal articles increased, he spent as little on himself as possible, and Maria was satisfied in the quiet life which he had imposed on her as on himself. How could she fail to be happy with the young ardent man, who regarded her as though she were his better life ! She listened with indifference when the old woman told her how people stood still in the street with astonishment at her beauty.

There soon arrived a time when Johannes dismissed the old woman, because she pitied Maria

that her lot was not a better one, and because he did not go out with her, and was not always buying; and Maria let her aunt go, without opposition or further thought.

Life was, moreover, more agreeable to the two alone. Johannes had still somewhat of his paternal heritage, so that a certain ease surrounded them. He was, however, again occupied over his books, and began again to be absorbed and lost in work; his union with Maria had calmed all the restless impulses of his nature. He now proposed writing a book, which he thought might bring him forward in the world. At the same time he competed for a position in a school, where a teacher was required who had not passed through the university—all for the sake of a livelihood! and Johannes thought that he might *after all* be appointed to the post his father had held, only that he would live when his father had died; and he felt an exhortation to energy and seriousness in everything.

Maria, however, became more lovely every day. She was scarcely eighteen years old, and with her refined pallor, and soft, noble features, she looked like some foreign apparition. Her dark eyes gleamed in their wonderful depth—there was a touch of sweet sadness resting on her eyelids, and

the slightly arched brows completed the noble contour; her shining black hair lay over her smooth brow, and a peculiar smile played round beautiful lips. She was slender as a palm-tree, gentle and slow in her movements; and there lay a mysterious charm in her strange, cold manner, which rendered it so difficult to penetrate into her nature. Occasionally something that looked almost like wildness flashed through her dreamy eyes, but it passed away before it could be said it was there. Generally she was soft to weakness, allowing others to do with her what they would, as if she knew nothing of her power and great beauty.

‘Beautiful and terrible as the Sphinx.’ How did the idea occur to him when he one day attempted poetically to sing a ‘song of songs’ in those early days, when his heart seemed to open in the full enjoyment of his happiness?

He marked out the line again, asking himself how it was possible that it should have occurred to him. It had only wafted to him a dread of the power and depth of human feelings.

Maria’s origin also was mysterious and strange. Sometimes of an evening, when she was sitting quietly, she would begin, with her arms thrown round him, to tell of the gay flowers and birds, and



of a calm lake, on the shore of which she had played; at times she thought she had only dreamed it, but she had had the dream so often that she really believed. She had been long with the old pilot-woman in the village on the East Friesland coast, but she could not endure the sea, and the smell of seaweed and fish was disagreeable to her. She told him the name of the village, but it must have been very insignificant, for it was not to be found on the map. The grandmother with whom Maria had been had sufficient for her livelihood. They had always had enough to eat; Maria had good clothes, and had no necessity to work; she played with the cat, and fed the hens, and looked for shells on the shore, and sat in the little garden in the sunshine; and when she did not like to go to school she did not go. The grandmother was very old, and was always expecting her son, who had gone to sea and did not come back again. Once, when Maria was very small, he had brought her with him, and had entered her name in the church register as his daughter, so that she might inherit his possessions if he did not return; this the grandmother had repeatedly told her. But she was, nevertheless, not his child, nor did the grandmother consider her to be so. She had

always been afraid of him; it had been a long time since she had seen him.

She had not been sorry when the grandmother died. The old woman had been at last quite silent and stupid, and her head had always shaken; Maria had not liked to touch the bony hand, and she had an awe of the leather-like countenance, with its wrinkles and deep-set eyes. When the grandmother was at last dead, it was found that there was nothing for Maria. They had spent everything, and Maria was to go upon the parish. Then the pastor's cook, who was a relation of the pilot's widow, and had come to the funeral, took her home with her. Maria had been comfortable in the pastor's house, but the housekeeper would not keep her, for the Herr Pastor had always placed the best morsels before her; she was only to sew and knit a little when she liked, and to water the flowers in the garden. The pastor would not hear of her doing hard work, and so the housekeeper had been angry and sent her to Hamburg.

It touched Johannes deeply that Maria had been thus left in the world. But what was the riddle of her origin compared with the miracle of her existence? It was his happiness that no one had

prevented her from living for him. Maria, however, regarded herself as of noble birth. She wore a small gold amulet, on which various figures were engraved, suspended from a little gold chain round her neck; and this she valued as a clue to her right parents. She gave it at times playfully into Johannes' hands, and he had to purchase forgiveness by kisses, when, though he could read so many books, he could not explain to her the signs.

Again some time elapsed. Johannes had had a post in a school, and had relinquished it again as impossible for him. He had, however, with great boldness, and perhaps too much self-confidence, begun a work on northern Sagas and mythological legends; and occasionally he wrote articles for journals, and translated for a publisher. The miserable piecemeal employment humbled him not, for he lived in the sunshine of happiness; but he felt that he must direct his future into other channels, and he considered how it might be possible to enter the path which he had once placed before him in conformity with Thorson's decision. If he succeeded in passing over a few years, he regarded his own and Maria's future as secured. Effort and work were not for her; how did he know if she could bear the struggle of life? She was Nausicaa at the washing-trough, Rebecca

at the well, a priestess of Vesta at the sacred hearth.

He had asked her one day whether she wished that they should be married, for Maria had been grave, and sad shadows had passed over her face. She had said she must write to the pastor's house, for that it oppressed her to have a husband in secret. The old woman—who occasionally of an evening stood under the window and waited till Johannes went out, and then knocked and spoke a few words with her—had suggested this to her.

‘For aught I care, openly before all the world,’ Johannes said; and he inquired at once into the manner in which the civil formalities were discharged. The difficulties were, however, great, for both were strangers; papers and certificates had to be procured; great expense was connected with the settlements; and, moreover, Johannes had been summoned for military service, and was required in his home—the substitute whom he must engage would demand a large sum. He himself regarded the nuptial ceremony with indifference; what else than indifferent was it in the earnestness of his love? Maria also would hear no more of it.

‘No, no, it cost money,’ and must they not save,

and spare? She agreed with him, as he did with her, and she called herself by his name.

The old woman next suggested, and Maria followed it out, that she should learn to make artificial flowers; and she went to a neighbour who instructed her in the work, and Johannes was delighted at her earnestness and goodwill. He thought also that she ought to learn to write correctly, and to read better, but she sighed when she had to go to the work, and sat down before the mirror and loosened her hair, and plaited it, and indulged in bewitching triflings; and when he wanted to read aloud to her, and to tell her his stories, she would stand up and walk away from him as majestically as a queen, or she would cover the book with her hands, and look at him so naïvely and charmingly, that he seemed silly to himself with all his learning and knowledge; for nature had been the only teacher of this fascinating woman, and man's wisdom could here only disturb and destroy!

They were obliged to leave their pleasant dwelling shortly before Christmas. The furniture which the old woman had purchased with such useless lavishness was left with the landlady in the place of a part of the rent. Johannes had found a cheap apartment outside the deich gate,

where the remainder of their things were sufficient for moderate arrangement. Maria had left unwillingly, but she had assented, when Johannes told her his plans for the future, with the same unresisting grace as she had at first followed him, and still ministered to his happiness.

They intended to go to Berlin early in the spring, and he hoped to be still able to find time for daily tuition in addition to the medical study, which he purposed seriously to pursue there. He considered his energy and perseverance as inexhaustible. Introductions to a journal there were offered to him by his friends; his work, which he hoped to finish in the course of the winter, would bring him in considerable profit; lessons were to be found in Berlin, just as well as here; and the life which he had planned according to his judgment he believed himself able to regulate in its demands and relations.

It was gloomy and melancholy in the new dwelling. Maria did not like being there, and she could not endure the woman of the house, who was to relieve her of the heavy work in the small ménage. For hours Johannes sat at his writing-table, and then the room was deathlike in its silence, and she dared not disturb him. She sat apart in the window, looking on the street, where

no one passed, tended her few flowers, and played with a little white dog which belonged to a neighbour, or sat lost in reverie, as if a world of sweet thoughts lay concealed beneath that sweet brow, and she were only restraining the words which, full of intelligence, would issue forth from those lovely lips, if she only vouchsafed to open the charming gates.

Johannes often looked at her as he wrote ; he thought if he were not obliged, and if their livelihood did not depend on it, he would throw all the unmeaning jingle into the fire ! She occupied herself a little with flower-making, but she did not exhibit much progress in any work ; her canary bird played prettily on her hand, and she gave him pet names, and he learned to pick his food from her lovely lips. Her hand shrank from contact with hard or laborious things. She had the taste and inclinations of a refined lady, although she had grown up in a fisherman's hut. Fortune had erred by assigning to her the lot of meeting a man who possessed alone that wealth of the value of which her own mind had told her nothing.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE SERPENT'S WHISPERS.

THE winter was unusually severe that year ; it became cold early in December, and the snow lay in frozen heaps in the streets. It was damp and gloomy in Maria's kitchen, and the water froze in the cold bed-chamber. They lived in a corner house, the room was sunless ; and when the wind blew, it howled and whistled past the windows, and shook the doors. Maria could not endure the cold ; it seemed still and dead wherever she looked and listened. Johannes was not always there ; he had resumed his intercourse with his acquaintances ; he had to search through libraries, because he had once so thoughtlessly cast away his books ; in the evening he had lessons to give. They were now living on what he earned, for he had resolved not to touch the remainder of the money which he had from his grandfather, so that the removal to Berlin might be possible in the spring. He had given his word to himself, and no present distress and difficulty should induce



him to change this resolve. But his earnings were barely sufficient, and the little ménage declined more and more. Why *was* he so wilful as not to use what he had put by, and which was, after all, necessary at the present moment? Maria sat thoughtful and sad; she mended his clothes, pricked her fingers over the work, and dreamily breathed into her beautiful hand in the chilly room.

He had once taken her to Klaren. He had gone to his old friend for advice and concurrence in his plans for the future. Klaren had plainly told him that it would all come to a bad end, and had altogether expressed himself in such a manner that Johannes thought he would show him the being that held him with such enduring bonds. On the day on which Klaren had seen Maria, one of those moods had come over him in which he had played the violin that night in Saint Pauli. He was out of humour when he saw Johannes afterwards, and spoke of youthful stupidity and folly; he was vexed, moreover, for Franziska's sake; nevertheless, he allowed that Maria's beauty was quite overpowering. He did not, however, come to Johannes' house, although the latter had invited him, and Maria had smiled upon him when the invitation had been given. Klaren had,

however, looked into the work on which Johannes had expended his utmost powers; he had written respecting him and his work to a publisher in Berlin with whom he was on intimate terms, and Johannes went courageously onwards. All that his old friend had said to him of the utter ruin he might expect from his connexion with Maria had goaded him to defiance and self-reliance, and with decision he rejected all that might impede and fetter him in the course of his destiny.

Christmas was approaching. The streets were full of noise and surging crowds; the sledges tinkled through the air in the clear frosty weather, the shop-fronts abounded in splendour! Everything was radiant with brightness and wealth! Maria was unwell at the time; the keen air had been too much for her, and Johannes had told her—with what words and with what love!—how he thanked her for enduring with him, and having patience with him, as there was something in her so pure and blessed, and so utterly different from others. Maria was so beautiful in her weariness and languid repose; he would gladly have thrown into her lap a hundred thousand small things, which she might have liked, although he could not truly understand what pleasure she could take in them.

The festive season passed by, without joyousness and mirth. He sat busy at the writing-table all day, and Maria laughed when he at length threw away the pen, and inveighed against 'the accursed money,' which had to be got together by slavish work, and which, after all, never came ! The family in which he gave lessons had forgotten to pay him, in the disorder of Christmas preparations, and he lacked the necessary funds, upon which he had reckoned just for this very time ! And ever poorer and scantier grew the aspect of Maria's kitchen and store-closet ; wood and oil were waning ; and soon a time came when they had to beg for patience, being pressed to pay outstanding debts. Thousands of men are acquainted with these cares, and they did not weigh heavily on Johannes ; he was always hoping to obtain a little money. 'Maria must only hold out ; the winter would soon be past ;' so he consoled her. Indifferently he allowed her to sell all that was superfluous, and all that they could not take with them, when they removed in the spring. It never seemed to him as if they were much in want. So he went his way, and his happiness stood fixed within him, as though it were based on brazen pillars.

One evening, soon after Christmas, Johannes

had gone out. Maria was sitting alone, watching the clouds as they passed over the moon, and thinking how long the evening was, and how slowly the time went by, when there was a gentle knock at the window, and Maria started at seeing the old aunt, who had been expelled the house.

‘I could not endure it any longer, and I wanted to see for once how matters were going on,’ said the old woman. And she came in, took a seat in the room, looked round her, shook her head, and gazed at Maria with tender regret. An hour had quickly passed with their chatter and talking. ‘If I might only come again,’ said the old woman at departing; ‘Johannes does not know how well I mean it. Poor Johannes, he is working himself to death, and hasn’t food to eat!’

She begged Maria not to tell him she had been there; ‘men like to have their own will, and are angry when all is not done as they like!’ The old woman scattered her poison like sugar over her words.

But she came again, and Maria said nothing about it. Johannes could be violently angry and passionate for a moment, if he were opposed, and therefore she was silent. When the old woman was there, Maria had no need to care for anything; she cleared up, placed everything straight,

and brought with her what was wanting. Circumspect as the cat which sneaks about the tree where the pretty bird is sitting and singing, which she is on the point of seizing and eating, the old woman went her crooked ways, and wore her garb of vice with as much unconcern as a maiden does her fresh flower-wreath. Anyone, who had not an inward dread of her, might even like her. Maria thought she was the most obliging creature. The old woman would go in to her neighbour and see if she could help; she was ready to nurse anyone; she gave physic, and rendered assistance when it cost her nothing; moreover she liked dogs and cats, and had a cage full of canaries, and knew how to talk so prettily and merrily! Maria would sit leaning back in the arm-chair, listening with smiling indifference as the old woman told of the ladies whom she waited upon, and of whom she bought silk dresses and finery which they required no longer, after having once appeared in them in the fashionable world. What stories did she not tell of poor girls who had become princesses? The magician's rod was ever in her hand, bringing forth golden apartments, ornaments, and pearls! It was always a life in Utopia which she depicted, and it seemed to Maria just as natural to sleep like

the beautiful princesses on silken couches, to eat from golden dishes, and to be waited on by a fairy body-guard, as to be borne on rose-leaves through the air, and to be drawn by beautiful horses through the ugliest streets. Without lay the world, with its splendours and mirth, and magnificence. Why did she live with him in want and poverty?

‘Poor Johannes!’ said the old woman. ‘He is growing quite serious, and old and ugly, with his everlasting book-writing. Who reads such things, and cares to pay for such things? Thou art only a burden to him; he thinks so himself; if not just now, he will do so soon.’

Maria shook her head. On this point she was certain; but she feared him because he was too earnest, and often too strict; and the old woman was of opinion that it was always so with poor people. At this moment, when he was running about to earn a few shillings, when they were both obliged to sit in the back room and put out the light, for fear he should find her and be angry at the little bit of innocent pleasure, because she was telling stories to Maria, the great ladies were driving to the theatre and to parties, their white shoulders gleaming out from the lace trimmings; how magnificent they looked! And when they

walked through the apartments, carrying their heads so high, their silk and velvet dresses rustled and flowed behind them ; and a poor girl had to walk along the streets, and to go through dirt and mire in her thick shoes ! No one bowed to her and took off his hat ; the ladies looked down upon her as she passed, and the girl was after all more beautiful than their ladyships, and utterly different !

Why shall we tell of misery and mere frailty ? What does it matter to us how baseness spins its threads, and whether they are quickly woven into the fatal tissue ? The old woman had told Maria that things would grow worse with her ; that Johannes could not care for her ; that soon his last little morsel would be gone, and then she would have to go and beg, and would see what would become of her. Now she had it in her power, she could make him happy and herself. And the old woman said she knew of one who would give thousands only to be allowed to kiss the tip of Maria's little finger. The rich man pays, the poor people who may like each other do not on this account separate. Johannes knew nothing of the world. If anything of the kind were to be said to him he would boil up, fire and flame ; this was because he was uneducated, the

old woman said, and knew nothing of life. Did Maria, then, think that the noble ladies who looked down on the world from above, did not know what they were doing when they married for money and honour? And the men, the great nobles, no less than the citizens, did she think that they would take a wife for the sake of money, when otherwise they did not care for her, if they did not know ways and means to make life agreeable in another manner? This was called shameful when it was publicly talked of, but secretly every one had his pleasure in it, and liked to live and let live. Maria had only to wait till Johannes was older, and then he would be sensible, and not think himself wiser and better than other people.

Maria was stupified and confused ; and when she was preparing the meagre soup, and burning her hands in the kitchen over the sooty pans ; when she saw Johannes at his work, sitting up half the night only to finish his task, she would go up to him sometimes, and look at him with a question on her half-opened lips ; but she never uttered the question ; and when she was troubled and uneasy, longing for his kiss, and often sad and desolate of heart, he should have looked deeper than in her lovely eyes.



Johannes had met the old woman one evening in the street, not far from his house, and he had called to her and told her she was not to venture near Maria. The old woman had gently replied that the street was free to all the world. What were he and his belongings to her?

He had told Maria of the meeting, and had poured forth his invectives against the aunt; and Maria had wept, and put out the light because she would not look at him; and had her good angel that evening passed by, and lightly touched her heart, she would have told him the truth and all would have been otherwise.

While all this was occurring to Johannes and his fair *innamorata*, Franziska had passed through a trying time. Her mother had made a journey with her, and had gladly expended her savings in the hope of diverting her. They had been on the Rhine. On that magnificent stream, the pride of Germany, they had seen castles and ancient cities, woods and vineyards, and all the charms of the neighbourhood. Franziska had heard high mass at Cologne, and the music, joined to her devotional feeling and the heavenward journey, excited by the holy twilight of the church, had made her heart melt in tears. They had travelled back through Thuringia, with its

famous cheerful towns and beautiful woods, splendid in their autumnal garb; and her heart had risen amid all the beauty and wealth of the great German Fatherland. Ever again joy broke like a gleam of blue sky through her darkened soul, and she would draw a deep breath and think, 'I shall get through! my heart is reviving again! it is after all not broken!'

At length they came to Berlin, where Franziska saw the statues and paintings in the museum—a new and wonderful world to her! In Leipzig she had been fortunate enough to be present at a musical festival; she had heard a symphony by Beethoven magnificently performed, and her soul had entered with conscious feeling into the power and grandeur of that world of melody, and she had thought: 'If all must suffer, if all the greatest men must know pain and despondency, until they arrive at victory and at a certainty of their own strength, why do not I endure silently; why do I thus despair in the wild longing of my feeble heart?'

It was in November when they returned home, and Franziska felt that the diversion of the journey had availed her but little. She avoided walking through the streets from a fear and longing to meet Johannes. Whenever she turned

a corner it seemed to her as if he would suddenly approach her and accost her, and upstairs in her home was the very room in which he had once lived ! It was now closed ; no one went into it now. The single step on the stairs creaked if anyone went up or down ; the door above was, however, never opened, and the place at the table where he used to sit was empty ; Franziska knew he would never again sit for her in that place.

She did not, however, give way ; with the utmost zeal she applied herself to music. Klaren wished that she should come to him daily. They played together on two grand pianos, and she learned much that was new and important. But the mother saw that she did everything by coercion and strength of will ; she could not bear to see Franziska's pale face, sad smile, and weary bearing, and once she thought it would be better if she did not shut up everything within herself, but would speak of what lay on her heart. The widow spoke now of the old times, and asked Franziska if she would not engage a master to instruct her, as Johannes had done ? With the mention of the name so long silent on the lips of both, the ice was broken, and Franziska looked at her mother.

‘I will not abuse him,’ said the widow; ‘but such a union, without propriety, honour, and respectability!’

Franziska’s heart, however, glowed, and she grew red as fire. ‘Mother,’ she said, ‘Johannes is the best, the noblest man living! There is no impure feeling in his heart, no confused thought in his brain; there is no lie on his lips, and no falsity in his hand. I have seen her with him.’ Franziska could scarcely utter the words for inward emotion; the syllables trembled on her lips. ‘Mother, she is so beautiful, that one is mute, and feels inclined to fall on one’s knees and worship God for having created such a miracle of beauty. Johannes *must* love her, as I must love him, because I know how good and great he is. But now let us speak no more of it, dear mother; in me all must ever remain the same, though I live for a thousand years. I ask myself only, what I shall do to live? My misery is that I cannot find the Right; that I know not what to undertake, in order that, reconciled to sorrow, I may still struggle with my exacting nature. I have now to carry my best feelings as a corpse within my breast. But I will endure and wait, and stand fast even in death. It passes through my heart like a gleam of light, when I read how the

Saviour went to the grave and took the dead man by the hand and called to him to arise and live.'

'Ach!' said Frau Warning, 'if you were only like other girls, and thought more of yourself, and did not give way.'

'If I were to give way,' said Franziska, 'I should let my hands sink on my lap, and should brood and creep about all day long, as if my burden were too heavy for me. I am ashamed that it is so ; but it shall not be !'

'You should have more pride and more character,' said the mother. 'What is there in the man? Is he worth more than you and the sacrifice of everything? Let him go! We will never speak of him more !'

It was a cold foggy evening. A masquerade for that day had been announced at every street corner, when the old woman, with a packet under her arm, came stealthily into Maria's dark room, with her heart full of revenge, anger, and indignation against Johannes.

'Well, my sweet dove,' she said, with a grinning smile, 'he is gone ; I waited till I saw him go out. There is a drinking party this evening at the Pavilion.'

'Johannes is not going to the masquerade with

the others ; he will be at home at ten o'clock,' said Maria.

'Even then,' said the old woman, 'we have time. You *shall* go to the theatre once, at any rate ! He is as jealous as a Turk. I wonder he does not lock the door when he goes out.'

Maria stared fixedly. 'Go !' she said. 'Leave me !'

The old woman drew out a little hat of white crape and rose-buds, in the prettiest style, as if made by the first milliner of the town. She had brought with her a silk dress of a delicate hue, with an over-garment of lace ; there were not lacking, moreover, perfumed gloves, light boots, silk stockings, and under garments of the finest texture and pattern.

Maria did not understand why her aunt had procured all this. 'To see thee look pretty,' she said. 'I do not give it to thee ; it is all lent for this evening. Do I not love thee, my pretty dove ? Dost thou think that I am so poor ? It is true I have no money for such ugly petticoats as thy dear man gives to thee ; I am niggardly enough when such things are to be bought. And how the Mamsell has suited the dress to thee ! Where is there another like thee ? Thou makest no appearance, dressed as thou art !'

Maria put on the beautiful attire; and the old woman stuck a couple of wax candles, which she had brought with her, into bottles—which she rummaged out of the kitchen, for there was only one candlestick in the house—and she lighted up the looking-glass; and when Maria saw herself in her attire, she smiled, still more strangely than usual, looked round the room, threw her cotton gown on the bed, and again stood before the mirror; and she looked like a young queen who has put on her coronation-robcs and is ready to ascend the throne and receive homage.

The old woman cast a malicious side glance at her, and threw a mantle over her, the very same old mantle which Maria had worn on the first evening that Johannes had seen her.

They went softly and unobserved out of the door, and the old woman put the key in her pocket. At the end of the street a carriage was waiting. The old woman was dressed like a wealthy woman of the bourgeois class; and they drove to the theatre.

The piece given was the ‘Montecchi e Capuletti.’ A female singer played Romeo with passionate feeling, and sang his graceful parts as if they were the notes of flutes. Maria sat with her eyes cast down; the old woman whispered to her

what a sensation she was exciting. They were in a box in the third row, and around her were other richly-attired ladies, who looked at them with barefaced curiosity. Maria sat with her noble bearing; her beauty wove a magic circle round her, so that she remained alone. Before her lay a bouquet, which a slender page, attired in elegant livery, had brought her; and among the flowers there was something that gleamed and glittered, and the old woman drew her attention to it. They were earrings and a pin with a diamond, which hung like a dewdrop from emerald leaves. And the old woman said she *knew* from whom the gift came, but she would say nothing. Maria knew also; a pair of eyes, in spite of the opera-glasses of the first row, had been too often fixed upon her.

They left before the representation was finished and returned home. The old woman went away, taking with her the dress, all the splendour and magnificence, and even the flowers and earrings; and when Johannes came home the princess was sitting like the Cinderella of the fairy tale, as if she had never moved from the spot. She was, however, absent and restless; when he opened the door, she started and was not herself. He fancied he had been too long away for her



loving impatience ; the disorderly drinking party had made him also confused.

From this time, although Johannes was almost always at home, occupied with his work, which was advancing towards completion—and demanded more time, study, and labour, the deeper he went—ruin was drawing closer circles round his happiness. The bad seed was springing up ; the serpent had not in vain held converse with the woman of his paradise. Johannes now even went no more out of an evening, and he relinquished his lessons, for his work claimed all his attention.

Maria, however, seemed to grow more beautiful day by day. He had no time for his sweet love ; she sat with her head cast down, looking at him at time with enquiring glances. Once it seemed as if she had been crying, and her eyelids were heavy, as if a secret woe were weighing them down ; and when Johannes urged her to tell him what was the matter, the blood rushed into her cheeks, and their delicate pallor glowed as if with an inner fire, and shyly and fearfully she seemed to avoid him.

Further and further, however, the old woman pursued her wiles. *How* she led Maria to the precipice, *how* from the dizzy heights she fell into the depths beneath, concerns us not. The enjoy-

ments of the world allure with demon-like power ; he who endures the temptation knows what it signifies. Maria had taken evil by the hand, as a child that plays with a poisonous adder.

Could her life but have been spread beneath her feet like a soft carpet, she would have been faithful. Johannes had no eye for that of which she felt the want. He had seized her for himself ; her beauty was all-powerful as the sun. Nature and freedom glowed in his veins. He had taken no precaution for circumstances.

Maria was like a flower which cannot endure a rough atmosphere. Ever since she had concealed aught from him, and her first sin had been but a light one, fear drove her away from him. She was afraid of his anger and of the flash of his fiery eyes.

Was she even now blind and deaf inwardly, that she could allow herself to be persuaded that he would be satisfied, if she came with her own shame to the help of his poverty ?

## CHAPTER III.

## REVENGE.

JOHANNES had gone to Berlin. Klaren had some business there, and as he travelled with post-horses, he was glad to take a companion with him. He wished to prepare for the move at Easter. Maria had given him leave of absence for a week, but she had been sad and agitated, and had held him at the door and had called him back again when he had actually gone. She had promised to take into the house, during his absence, a pretty bourgeois child, who had learned to make flowers with her. Johannes had warned her again of her aunt, who from the first had designed only evil towards her; and Maria had looked at him with her wonderful smile, as though she did not exist for anyone to purpose good or evil with her, but lived and moved in her own divine right.

He was glad when he once more saw the towers of Hamburg, after having been absent fourteen days. The short residence in Berlin had been agreeable to him. On the journey Klaren

had expressed his regret that he should have placed himself in circumstances which, in the best case, would fetter him in all free advance. An early marriage was always a misfortune, for we are not living in a state of nature. Wealth and competence can help us over many difficulties; but *how* is a man of mind and imagination to hold out when harnessed to the yoke of poverty and restriction. What has he from life, when he tastes nothing more of freedom and enjoyment than now and then an evening at the pothouse with other men, when he is deceived into a little mirth and happiness?

Johannes regarded the matter differently. There is nothing in the world, he said, which a man cannot overcome and subdue. Why, then, should this be impossible with respect to the power of the will? A man can, moreover, bear burdens, if needs be, in the service of an adverse fate. He remains what he is, a son of God, whom enmity to God has condemned to perform toilsome work, only he is conscious of standing above it when he takes upon himself the work of a servant. His mental crown is not lost to him, though for a time he may not bear it, but must submit to be employed in manifold slavery and hardship by the two tyrants—want and hunger. How can one

man, after all desire a better fate than the greater number of men, and shrink from the common lot of man? He relied upon himself to be able to provide for her and himself, and others besides.

Klaren was astonished at the success which Johannes met with in Berlin. Everything succeeded; the publisher took his work for a considerable sum; the editor of a journal to whom he was recommended had promised him employment. He had made inquiries as to the medical lectures, which he desired to attend; he had hired a dwelling—it is true, only a small sitting-room and bedroom—but what more did they require for a beginning? The thought of Maria stood like a bright sun over all that he did or purposed. He had written to her several times, though no answer had come from her. Her scarcely legible letters would have been more than good enough for him; but she did not like to write. He knew that she felt herself embarrassed and confused whenever she had to take pen in hand, and he understood *why* he had not heard from her.

During the return journey Klaren had touched upon a new theme, though Johannes said it was a variation of the old lament over him and his misfortune. Klaren now reprehended Thorson's arrangement of affairs, which had thrown a young

man upon himself, and withheld him from a seasonable visit to the university, so that everything happened at the wrong time. He spoke about the unreasonableness of laws which sanction that the dead should by their last will interfere with and regulate the destiny and circumstances of the living.

Johannes, on the other hand, esteemed it a happiness that such a man as Thorson should have taken his youth in hand. 'He wished to have me free,' he said, 'and I am so; I have lost no time.' And his eyes beamed; Maria's name was on his lips, and Klaren wrapped himself closer in his mantle, and shiveringly pressed into the corner of the carriage, and thought: 'Happy being, who is striving upwards in his pride, secure in his happiness, and in the feeling of youth.'

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They were again in Hamburg. Johannes knocked at the window of his dwelling, and was astonished that Maria was not sitting there ready to rise and open to him. He knocked again, and rang at the door. Where was Maria? Was she gone out? How could she go out when she knew he was coming home? The woman of the house came down, looked at him, and went up to fetch

the key. Johannes followed her; he asked after Maria. Where was she? was she ill? The strange look of the woman had struck him.

‘She is not ill, so far as I know,’ said the woman; and she reached down the key, which she had hung on a nail.

Johannes could have burst open the door with impatience. Why was she not at home?

He entered his dwelling; everything was cleared away, and in its place. The woman of the house came to him, and said that Maria had gone away immediately after he had started; that she had given her the key; here were letters that had come for him. Johannes bade the woman go away.

He ran through the kitchen and through the bedroom, back into the sitting-room; on the table, in the window where she used to sit, stood her little work-basket; and on the window-sill, among the withered flowers, was the cage with her canary, which lay starved to death in it.

His blood froze; his hair stood on end; he felt as if his soul were wrenched from its dwelling-place, as he took up a slip of paper inscribed with his name, which lay on her little table, and read it. The letter was as follows:—

‘My very dear Johannes,

‘Thou art poor, and I am so too; it is terrible to be poor! Thou workest thyself to death; that is terrible for thee and for me. Farewell; we shall meet again. I will write to thee when thou mayest come.—*THY MARIA.*’

The man accused of a capital crime, who sits and knows that his sentence of death is coming, whenever the man sitting over him in judgment opens his mouth, has got something in him of the hope which clings to life. So Johannes went through the streets, the by-ways, wherever his fate led him. On the way he said to himself that she might have gone into service—what did he know? He was like a man walking in darkness, and whistling a song because he is afraid. Like a flash of lightning it passed through his mind that the old woman knew where she was. He resolved to go to the witch, who had here carried on her devilish arts.

The old woman was sitting in the midst of all sorts of trumpery, which she was mending. She looked at him with such astonishment and surprise, knew of nothing, was so horrified that Maria had gone away, groaned and lamented so naturally, that he closed the door in her face, and went his way.



He made enquiries of the few people who knew her. No one had seen her or heard of her; the woman of the house had not paid regard to those who had gone out and in below; she lived upstairs, and much might go on without her knowledge.

Johannes did not know what to do next. 'If she is dead,' he thought, '*how* shall I find her again?'

But he *would* find her, however deeply she was hidden or buried.

His acquaintances, to whom he had never spoken of her, must help to seek her; Johannes inquired, investigated of the police, but all in vain! Higher and higher rose the flood of his feelings, and more and more strong grew the passion within.

At length, on the third day, towards the afternoon, a carriage drove past the Jungfernstieg, where he had stood all day keeping incessant watch. A lady was leaning back on the silken cushions of the vehicle. Like a lightning flash the carriage rolled by. He had recognised *her*!

He ran and threw himself into a drosky.

'After that carriage!' he cried; and Johannes handed the coachman a piece of gold, which he still had remaining from his journey. He had not been out of his clothes for three days; he had

neither slept nor eaten ; only now and then he had quaffed some strong drink in thirsty burning haste.

They overtook the carriage ; the coachman stopped outside the gate, at a small country-house standing in a garden. The horse panted and foamed with the speed of the race. He knew now where she lived. She alighted at the entrance to the little garden, and went on foot up the gravelled path. A slender man came towards her, put his arm round her, and they stood softly whispering.

Johannes ordered the coachman to drive him back to the town. He had asked a man in livery, loitering about in front of the country-house, whether the gentleman residing there was married.

‘ God forbid,’ said the servant, laughing.

Johannes felt as if he must now go to a court of judicature. Maria—what did Maria concern him ? He cast her from him as a corrupt morsel. What had he in common with her and her infamy ? But he would again have a right to the light of the sun. This man had broken into the sanctuary of his happiness like a wolf, and had committed a terrible outrage upon him. She lay in the mire ; could her soul but be washed pure again in the blood of her seducer ! Never could he have the

man alive who had inflicted upon him such unredeemable ignominy ; treacherously had he come, and so might treachery be his fate !

An hour later he again stopped at the country house ; he had taken a pistol from the room of an acquaintance, who was not at home ; he had carefully loaded it, and pulled the trigger.

Some seconds after he had been admitted, there was a wild confusion, running and tumult, in the house. A shot had alarmed the quiet neighbourhood. Fallen on the steps, with a shot fired through his head, lay the master of the house ! Before the corpse stood a man, erect, deathly pale, with trembling lips ; and the beautiful woman who had entered the house so brilliantly a few days before, threw herself, agitated and contrite, on the ground at his feet.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ISSUE.

JOHANNES' act—the sudden attack and murder of a young man, universally beloved—caused a fearful sensation. In spite of the alleviating circumstance that the wild and rash act had been incited by jealousy, the indignation was great.

Johannes' friends, hoping to incline public opinion in his favour, had contributed to destroy his cause, for they advanced dangerous principles, subversive of morality. Even well-wishers shrunk from his bloody act of violence. Johannes' union with Maria had been the ruin of the morals of so young a man. A respectable family had been placed in mourning; a highly esteemed mother stood inconsolable by the coffin of her only son; an old name was extinguished with his life! The rich unmarried man had indulged in a beautiful mistress; and not to offend society by open indifference, he had with prudent delicacy managed to indulge his fancy in secret. He had been guilty of nothing; he had done nothing but what

morality scarcely condemns. He had been a good son, a good citizen, the most charming companion, the most distinguished man of business, and had come to such a fearful end—surprised and shot down in his own house, as by a murderer in the densest forest !

As an act of mercy, only a long imprisonment in a house of correction was the sentence passed as an expiation for such a deed. The judicial transactions soon came to an end ; the facts of the case lay open to all eyes. Johannes had briefly and freely confessed to what he had done.

He had even with reluctance consented to counsel for the defence. When he was asked the *reason* for his deed, the whole pride of his nature had come over him. His figure seemed to grow taller ; his dark eye flashed, and an expression of contempt hovered round his lips.

‘ My deed,’ he said, ‘ speaks for itself. Here I stand, no longer a man and lord of my fate. Civil order has been broken by me ; I await my sentence ; I must submit to whatever the law seems fit ; but no power on earth can pass *further* into my soul. What I have done from the necessity of my nature—what to *me* is Right and Honour—needs no judge but myself.’

He persisted in the same pride and in the same

demeanour. There was no possibility of saving him ; his stiff proud inaccessibility seemed even to wish to paralyse sympathy. His counsel tried to represent him as overstrained and mentally excited, as goaded by jealousy and revenge to a temporary state of frenzy ; but Johannes, with calmness, interfered with the advancement of such a plea.

During the imprisonment upon trial, the wild gloomy fire that burned in his eyes had been terrible to see. It was for Maria that he cared with a passion, which, in the powerlessness of his condition, made him motionless and fearful. The miserable story of her seduction and shame had become clear to him in the course of the investigations. They were placed opposite each other before the tribunal. With calmness he observed all that was passing round him ; none of Maria's movements escaped him ; she stood there pale, with her head cast down, and trembling knees ; she had avoided looking at him. He had seen how all eyes were riveted by her touching beauty ; he had seen the effect which her appearance produced on the multitude. 'Helen in the assembly of the old men,' he thought, and he looked at the judges in succession with cold irony. When she heard the sound of his voice, she had

trembled ; his eye pierced her as a sword ; then she stood with averted attitude, so that his eye could no longer meet her own. The horrid woman who had kindled the evil flame was also obliged to appear ; she was bold and calm ; she made her statements freely. Johannes saw how Maria raised herself erect, and turned her head ; he saw her nostrils dilated, her breath came quicker, her white lips swelled. She looked like some gentle falcon, ruffling its plumage to fly aloft ; she advanced one step towards the hag, then stood still, her head down, unresistingly mute—this woman of sin, false and soulless, and yet the sweetest, the most blessed he knew on earth.

All the dishonour of a woman now, however, awaited her. *This* idea left him not a moment's repose ; she had taken her own path, and it drove him to despair that he could no longer snatch her from it. What did it matter to him that he might, perhaps, be one day free again ! *Now* was the moment ! Like an avenging spirit an accusation rose from his deed of passion and revenge, and this accusation was directed against himself, that he had not known her, that he had awakened her and held her to the feeling of fidelity and honour ; and now it was too late, she was lost ! There was nothing after all so miserable, so terrible, as that

which awaited her! The civil disgrace which settled on his own head seemed slight compared to it. He could free himself from it; he could raise his head again; the disgrace was not in his soul. But what was to become of her? This beauty, this voice, these eyes! This woman, who allured to crime and ruin, who possessed every charm, and no power of resistance.

One day he burst into tears. It seemed to him as if all nature must clothe herself in mourning over a blossom thus sunk into ignominy and decay.

His old friend came to visit him. A request for free pardon, not for any alleviation of his punishment—which Johannes had resolved to make, which he had himself written, assigning the reasons on which it was based—had been rejected. His fate was decided. He now wrote to Maria. It was a letter full of fearful exhortation.

Johannes enquired after Maria, and Klaren brought forward various topics to divert him from the subject. She was a creature, he said, like hundreds of others, born to destruction and ruin in large cities; more beautiful indeed, but no better than others; ungrateful and unfeeling! Civilisation takes account of such lost existences just as little as nature does of her lost gems; countless children are born and die; the mothers



who brought them with pain into the world must submit when the fruit of their body decays, like the superfluous blossoms on the tree. How many noble young natures go to ruin, and are trampled under foot. How many a splendid work of art lies shattered! For Maria's sake he must not care; she would live in splendour and magnificence, while he—Klaren paused in deep agitation.

Johannes held out his hand to his old friend, and said: 'Explain this riddle to me; how it is that a human being looks so splendid and perfect, and has yet no soul! Nature must blush over her powerlessness and her unfinished work. That which beams and shines is *light*;' and he enquired again after Maria. Klaren was angry at the infatuation, but he told him that Maria had gone with lamentations from the house which she regarded as her property, and from whence they had turned her away because nothing belonged to her, and all had been but lent. 'A gentleman,' he said, 'had thrust his purse into her hand, and she had let it fall, when the police had taken her also into custody on that evening. She had, however, been long set at liberty. The notice which she had excited was of such a kind that it only remained with her to choose among many

woosers. For the present she was in the dwelling in which she had lived with Johannes.'

All this he had drawn out from his friend by questioning ; he could, perhaps, have obtained a sight of her, but he would not, and Klaren declined in any way to appear on Maria's behalf. But Johannes had written to Franziska, and had told her everything. He knew *what* Maria was ; the stigma of public disgrace was already upon her. Nevertheless, he relied upon Franziska ; he felt and knew that she would save the unhappy girl. He reproached himself with having, in the ecstasy of his happiness, worshipped Maria's beauty. He had presupposed in her everything good, and had regarded her as unapproachably pure and right. He spoke with stoical repose of that which stood before himself. He begged Franziska to think that it would either soon kill him or he would get through it, and that he whom she had once esteemed would ever remain the same. But she might save from ignominious ruin a being too beautiful—fashioned by God's hand as beautiful as earth and sky. He told her that when he thought on Maria's misery, it was as if he were to know, and yet to take it calmly, that all at once there would be no more light on earth, that

every truth would be transformed into a lie, and blooming nature changed into a muddy pool. If Franziska would set to work, like an angel of God she would bring purity and power where now all was feebleness and degradation.

When Johannes had written this letter, he became himself again; the stiff ice which had congealed his heart, while giving way to despair, melted away, and in the hope of one last calming word from Franziska, he submitted to the accomplishment of his fate.

With what feelings had Franziska read his letter! She made up her mind. Whether it were difficult or easy; whether she offended or grieved her mother; whether she had to conquer repugnance in her own nature; he should have the consolation which he demanded from her. No regard for others or for herself should hinder her or make her waver in guiding Maria according to *his* feelings. Franziska went to Klaren. Latterly he had shown her confidence, for with him she had spoken of Johannes. Klaren shook his head, and said she would effect nothing, nor would she bring it to a good end. *He* could not, and would not help her.

She went, therefore, alone, to Johannes's former abode, but she found Maria no longer there.

The woman of the house told her that three days ago Maria had come into her room with a small bundle under her arm, and the old cotton mantle wrapped round her, and had begged her to go with her to the steamboat ; she did not like to go through the street alone, and she wanted to return to her home. Maria had shown the woman a pass there ; she had a gold piece in her purse.

The woman had asked her if she knew Johannes' sentence, and if she would not see him. Maria had answered in the negative, but had trembled from head to foot. They had afterwards gone together to the steamer, and when Maria had bid her adieu, she had taken the ornament from her neck and had said ' she was to give it to *him*.' The woman said she would gladly have done so, only she had not been able to obtain permission.

It was the small gold coin, on which the strange signs were engraved, which Maria had always valued. Franziska took it, and promised to preserve it carefully.

She had written to Maria's home, but had received the information that she had not arrived there. Maria had gone in the post-diligence as far as Hanover.

Franziska travelled to Hanover. Her mother, finding that she was firm on the point, travelled

with her for company, so that no one might know why Franziska had undertaken the journey. It was given out that she was visiting a lady whose acquaintance they had made in the autumn.

There was, however, no trace of Maria to be found in Hanover; she had gone further with the diligence. The little inn was easily found out at which, on her arrival from Hamburg, she had alighted and remained the night. The servant-lad remembered that he had seen her, with her bundle under her arm, on the following morning, in the direction of a gate which he mentioned. All enquiries failed to reach further; even advertisements and appeals in public papers brought no result.

Franziska returned to Hamburg. She went to the old woman who called herself Maria's aunt. The woman, who had been in prison, poured forth her invectives against the false person who had escaped her, who owed her money. The woman had already written to the village near Osnabrück, and had received the same answer as Franziska.

Franziska wrote sadly to Johannes, and sent him Maria's remembrance. She could not go to him; as she had no consolation to bring him, she felt that to see him was more than she could bear

This was the last token of life and love that he received for many years.

We read of Dante's 'Hell,' and of the torments of the shadowy spirits in perdition. *Human* degradation, *human* torments and depravity, are somewhat different.

Leave all hope behind, ye who enter here.

A strong heart and a bright spirit hold out bravely. Let us turn away from the contemplation of his misery.

## CHAPTER V.

## A BROTHER'S ADVICE.

THE sun was shining on the pleasant garden of one of those pretty country-houses which, with their green lawns and rich flower-beds, lie along the banks of the Elbe, looking down upon the river, on which vessels are passing up and down.

This pretty country-house was the residence of Herr Warning, Franziska's brother, and his cheerful little wife; in a house standing further in the garden, Franziska lived with her mother. Fortune had visited the family. Herr Warning had settled in Hamburg; his foster-father had died in London, and had bequeathed to him the greatest part of his property. Franziska had been left a legacy of five thousand pounds sterling. She was now independent, and every comfort which prosperity can afford stood at her disposal. So during the summer she resided with her mother on her brother's pretty property on the Elbe.

They were all scattered about under the trees and in the shady spots on the fine Sunday morn-

ing. There was a party there for the day, and the young wife played the part of hostess with grace. All was cheerfulness, sunshine, and mirth throughout the house! In the evening there was to be an entertainment of music and dancing. Frau Warning was sitting among the flowers in the verandah; Franziska was talking English, and conversing with foreign guests. She looked weary, however; her eyes looked almost too large for her pale face, and she was carelessly attired.

It was four o'clock. All had retired to their rooms to arrange their toilette for dinner. They were weary with the long morning of loitering and sitting about in the garden, of admiring and enjoying the beautiful neighbourhood, of conversation and doing nothing.

Franziska was dressed. She was quickly ready, as was her wont, and she was sitting in the windows, engaged in putting on her bracelets and ornaments. She wished that her elaborate toilette should conceal her inward want of peace.

'Oh God! I cannot endure it!' she said half aloud to herself. 'How am I to bear it?' and she passed her hand across her forehead, and looked at her mother, who was sleeping on the sofa; and her face, which had been disturbed with sorrow, grew calm again.



Her brother entered at the same moment. He had come to fetch his mother and sister. Seeing Franziska's agitated countenance, he paused a minute at the door, and the words rose to his lips :

'You are not well,' he said.

'I have a headache,' she said, evasively ; 'but never mind, dear brother, it is of no consequence.'

'You have headache so often,' said her brother ; 'the mother complains that you have a pain in your chest.'

'It is nothing,' said Franziska.

'The mother thinks you are consumptive,' said her brother. 'It *is* nothing, control yourself! Nervous women are a misery to their surroundings.'

The blood rose to Franziska's face. 'It is as if I had a hollow where my heart is,' she said, 'and a few ashes over it ; there is a constant gnawing pain, but it is nothing after all. I see the doctor for my mother's sake.'

'For your mother's sake !' said her brother. 'Franziska, you say for your *mother's* sake, and you do nothing for her. You burden her with the sight of your suffering, and her inability to help you. I know it all !—the whole of the unhappystory ; the sickly wanderings of your heart ; the self-will with

which you persist in it. Do you know what you are doing? Look how your mother frets! A devotion and weakness such as yours is cowardly softness of heart, and borders on crime.'

Franziska had broken down at her brother's words. 'He is right,' she thought; 'if I were but far away and disturbed no one, and occasioned them no care.' But at the last words she felt herself again, and looked calmly at her brother.

'If you have a heart,' she said, 'do not reproach me. The dread of not being able to keep up oppresses me heavily enough, apart from the fact of my sickly appearance. It grieves me that I am not different, that I am not stronger in soul and body. But have patience; one cannot change oneself.'

Her brother shook his head. 'It is a good thing,' he said, 'that the world does not know what is occupying your thoughts.'

'I know what I owe to my family,' said Franziska, with bitterness. 'I have not yet endangered your reputation. That would do me little good.'

Her brother seemed to be controlling his feelings. 'Let me call the thing by its right name, then,' said he, 'for our mother's sake, for the sake of our being together. How is it with the man? Do you know anything of him?'

‘He is where he was,’ said Franziska, with a strong effort at self-command. ‘His miserable condition lasts for a year and a half. I know as little of him as you do.’

‘Unhappy girl,’ said her brother, involuntarily.

A tear stood in Franziska’s eye at the word of pity; she looked imploringly at her brother, who again resumed his severe expression.

‘Give it up,’ he said. ‘It does not lie in human power; submit reasonably; the man has never loved you, and has fallen into misery for the sake of another.’

Franziska seemed not to heed his words. ‘It may be possible,’ she said. ‘To whom can it signify that he should endure his fearful agony to the end? If he could go to America, whom would it harm? They speak of right and order in society. Had they but put him to death at once! Blood for blood. In the name of God all would now be atoned for, and he would now be at rest. But they have allowed him to *live*. He cannot thus perish and decay; alas! they know not what a man they are murdering and destroying!’

Her brother was angry. ‘Do you know that I am listening to you?’ he said; ‘leave off your rhapsody.’

Franziska looked at her brother with her sad smile. 'I have tried through your father-in-law,' she said; through the mother of the murdered young man; the family is more influential than any in the town. It is all in vain!'

'Are we living in Turkey,' said her brother, 'that you think the influential have only to will?'

'Everything is possible when one in power wills,' said Franziska. 'You know, as well as I, that much can happen and daily does happen in secret.'

'You are crazy and absurd,' said her brother; 'believe once for all that neither I nor others can do anything in this case.'

Franziska saw that the conversation would lead to nothing. Her mother had woken from her sleep. The brother and sister broke off quickly; neither had done the other any good, as is usual in such cases. They only felt how widely they were sundered.

Franziska appeared in company and constrained herself, that she might not excite attention; and she spoke of indifferent things, just because she was where she was, and could free herself from the relations and duties of the family.

The entertainment in her brother's house had gone off to perfection—it was spoken of in the

town. The guests were select, the master and mistress of the house were radiant with youth and happiness! Franziska had taken it too heavily to heart, when her brother had said that she destroyed the cheerful life of her family! Who was not satisfied on this day? The mother even seemed to revive in the splendour of the house, and had much confidence in the power of time. Franziska was affable. Nevertheless, the gentlemen of the party found it difficult to converse with her. Franziska would be a good match, but she was over-excitable and over-refined.

## CHAPTER VI.

## A CONFIDENCE.

FRANZISKA was with her friend Klaren. For some time she had gone again to him. She had neglected her music. It seemed as if it had lost its power over her.

Klaren had remained true to her. He had been in failing health for some time, and admitted none. Franziska alone might go to him when she would. He could not, however, see her pale face, her sad smile, and her weary demeanour, without a kind of exasperation against the man who had half broken her affectionate heart, whether by his destiny or by his own guilt. But he reproached himself also. Had he never interfered, it might perhaps after all have been otherwise for both.

On this day Franziska could not succeed, in spite of her self-constraint and earnest will, in fixing her mind on her music. She sat at the open piano, and struck the notes before her; but she did not play, and she seemed struggling to come to some resolve. 'Dear Klaren,' she said at

length, 'if I might; if you would have patience and kindness to listen to me.'

'Poor child,' said Klaren, and he stroked her hair and continued kindly: 'Do you sleep better? Tolerably, do you not? Do you go out of doors a good deal? You occupy yourself? You ought to be more industrious! I am not satisfied!'

'Never mind, dear Klaren,' said Franziska, kissing him; 'you are the friend of my heart; do not repel me! You know well how I constrain myself always, and among all with whom I live. You know that every morsel I eat is gall in my mouth; that comfort and ease are my torment! It seems to me that I could bear it more easily if I could wear a hair shirt and be immured in a convent cell, and suffer and expiate like him! I have to bear a great inner sorrow as if I were contented and light-hearted. But why do I speak of *myself*? There are many who, with a mask over their face and tinsel over their wounds, hold out amid amusement and frivolity, because they cannot be otherwise, and dare not be otherwise in the world to which they belong; even when they are ill, there is no sanctuary for them where they can remain alone. Do not torment me, dear Klaren, about being industrious. Your great masters do not penetrate into my heart! I hear

*his* voice and I see *his* face! I cannot bring my thoughts from this *one* dark spot. I try to do a little good to the poor and the unhappy, by means of money, work, and solicitude; *his* fate ever remains the same!

‘Dear child,’ said Klaren, taking both her hands, and looking lovingly into her face. ‘Must I remind you of it? Your mother *lives* in you; she hopes that I may help you to strengthen your good sense and to conquer your feelings.’

‘Yes,’ said Franziska; ‘I know what my mother has done for me.’

‘Now, dear child,’ said Klaren, ‘can your religion not help you to resignation? What do we not see decline and die? We have to endure the death of those we love; how much that is beautiful and great is stifled in its prime! Learn to recognise the seriousness of life.’

‘If he were *free*,’ said Franziska, ‘nothing would be too difficult to me. It is, however, not right that a man who is noble-hearted, full of energy and honourable feeling, because his blood was *hot*—’

‘Well,’ said Klaren, ‘is civil society not to afford protection against such hot blood? Is each allowed to act tyrannically in his own right, and to attack and shoot another if his hot blood is



excited? We cannot give free play to the right of nature. The tyrant in *your* life is a fearful idea, and I have no advice to offer.'

'Nor must you advise me, dear Klaren,' said Franziska. 'Do not pain me like all the rest. After I have spoken with you to-day it shall be over. I will not torment you further, because after all I desire otherwise than you consider right. But you must help me; you must be my trustee, Klaren; this is why I have come to-day. The civil order which you hold so high requires that I should have a trustee; my brother thinks of my money; will you think of me? Respect my feelings even when you do not justify them! You will not place the dead money and the necessity of saving it before me as a duty; do not let me be dashed to pieces on *this* hard rock!'

Klaren looked at Franziska. A deathly pallor was on her face; she looked at him so earnestly that he could not do otherwise. He held out his hand to her and said, 'It is well, Franziska.'

'Thank you,' she said, softly, and she bent over his hands and kissed them with fervour. 'I thank you for all the kindness, and for the faith also which you desire to have in me. Oh, Klaren! at the beginning of his misfortunes I was almost crushed; I thought, moreover, "It is his right, he

*must* suffer and expiate. Wherever blood has flowed no flowers grow, but a cross stands as an atonement—may he bear *his* in God's name!" I cannot tell you, I could not let you look into my heart and see what I felt, until I apprehended the words, "Forgive us our trespasses." I tried to submit, I went with fettered hands and feet. Who among men heard the voice of my supplications? Then suddenly I was rich! I was of age; I had money in my hands! What a moment was that when I felt myself independent! I had never possessed anything; at the time when I had earned anything, I had regarded nothing as my own property. But my mother had now more than she required. How grateful I am to him who gave me the money; the kind friend, for whom I had never done anything. But I knew *why* it was given me.'

'I have made many efforts already,' began Franziska again, after a pause, for Klaren listened in silence to all she said. 'It is impossible, they say. I meet with no counsel, and I know no help. But *free* he must be, nevertheless. He *must* be so; I feel that I must succeed, and if the doors of his prison were ever so strong, I *must* burst them open.'

Klaren looked sadly at Franziska. 'Is this my

dear old child,' he said ; 'is this unhappy man to disturb and bewilder this gentle peaceful mind also? Is everything gone? Reason, submission?'

'Yes,' said Franziska, 'and it must go. Even you, Klaren, may think nothing of me! I may appear even to you mad and perverse. I must endure what cannot be altered. But that *he* should perish and be ruined, and no hand raised to save him!'

'You believe surely, fixedly in God's providence?' said Klaren, not without irony.

'It may go on in this way one year after another,' said Franziska; and she gazed before her as though she were looking on a dark and endless waste. 'My heart rebels against the thought. Klaren, *you* have put him out of your remembrance; you were once good to him, and took an interest in him; he was like one whom you knew, who comes and goes, and then it is over. But *I!* I *love* him like my own life and blood—more, a thousand times more, than honour, repose, happiness, and everything! If he were covered with sin, if he were utterly in the wrong, I must atone with him and weep with him. If you tell me that he has loved another and not *me*, what does it matter to me? He could have gone his own way without making me miserable.

What I feel for him is not the feeling of a slave, serving for recompense. I have, moreover, neither chosen it nor desired it. It was the power by which I am and live! I see him now, day and night, in his misery. Ignominy and disgrace are his expiation. But for years. *That is too much.* No one has pity; no one has time, thought, or money for him! My brother puts before me that I must prudently keep and save what fortune has given me. Your sympathy and your friendship must see deeper within me. You need not help me, only not oppose me. Dear Klaren, I would do a thousand times more; gladly would I suffer a thousandfold deaths for him! You were not agreed with me at the time that I made enquiries after her who had brought all the misery upon him, because he had so desired it! His fearful act—a man cannot make up his mind to resignation and repose; he was chafing with inward pain; his pride rebelled! This I understood, for I had felt it a thousand times. He loved her. Oh what it is to love! One is carried along as by a thousand powers; one is no longer in oneself, but one lives in another. I would have placed her at my table, and laid her in my bed; I would have borne ingratitude and torment from her. Do you think I do not know how burning is jealousy? I would have done everything, because he willed it.'

Franziska paused; she had grown still paler. 'Jealousy is low and miserable,' she continued; 'I trample her under foot, for she has an ugly countenance, and snakes are in her hair. I cannot live with any monster, and God is gracious to me so that I need not; for when the flood swells within me, and the storm troubles it, a gentle power rises and gazes at the evil one, and then it departs from me like some false delusion, and all that was repugnant to me wears a human aspect. How should I not have been able to endure a woman who is many thousand times more miserable than I? I could not at that time afford him the consolation.'

There was such an indescribable gentleness in Franziska's countenance, that Klaren rose, held out his hand, and said she might depend on him to do what he could. But he thought in his own mind: 'Such an hour I will not endure again. I cannot support it. How sad she looks; how spiritualized is her sweet nature! What has a man to go through on earth! And if any one has made up his mind to sit apart in the shade, only that he may enjoy repose, and that nothing may affect him, it is of no avail; the old distorted caricature is ever returning, and repressing calm intellectual cultivation.'

## CHAPTER VII.

## PLANS FOR RESCUE.

THE summer was over, the leaves were beginning to fall from the trees, and Franziska was standing one afternoon before the wife of the jailer. Often and secretly had she been with her before. She had gone for the first time under pretext of enquiring after a servant who had been in the jailer's service. The jailer's wife was astonished, for she did not know the girl at all. Franziska regretted the misunderstanding, begged to be allowed to rest a little after her long walk, and the conversation flowed naturally. The acquaintance was begun, and the first step taken. How many excuses and subterfuges she had since then employed with her mother to justify her journeys into the town! Her conscience never reproached her, although she was engaged in decoying a man from right and duty. Meanness and avarice were aiding her in the task. The woman sometimes required a shawl, sometimes a dress, and she had so much sympathy with the

young lady, that she at length took it upon herself to speak with her husband. The jailer on this day was at home, and Franziska had promised to take coffee with his wife. Very often already had she come at the same hour, and had submitted to familiarity and patronage, showing interest in the endlessly long and foolish stories which were told her, flattering the vain woman and endeavouring to attract her fancy; while the husband, peevish with liver-complaint, remained reserved and morose. Franziska's courage had almost failed, but the wife winked at her and went out of the room. The jailer then went up to her and enquired what she wanted.

Franziska placed a roll of money on the table, and her voice trembled, her knees knocked against each other; for she thought the money would after all, perhaps, be thrown at her feet. 'Have pity,' she said; 'give him this letter, which you may read. I only want to know something, and hear something of him.'

The man looked at her as if he would eat her up with anger. 'Not a word,' he said, 'without a certificate of permission.'

He did not take the money, but Franziska saw that he looked at it askance, and she went out of the room as quickly as she could.

She was stopped on the stairs by the jailer. He had followed her. He did not say a word of the money, but he told her of Johannes' well-being, and of his awful life, which appeared to him by no means terrible. Franziska lay all night awake in bed, and shivered till her teeth chattered; but she had now found the point at which she could start. A gleam of hope shone upon her. She had again power and courage. A kind of enthusiasm came over her, something akin to that faith which can remove mountains, and does not reckon on possibilities. She had prayed for resignation and strength both for herself and for him! In her enthusiasm and fervour she now proffered her life for his safety, that, having atoned for his guilt, he might glorify and praise God in his pure and noble life.

It was, however, a hard winter which Franziska had to go through. She never left off working upon the jailer with gold and persuasion; and laboriously, step by step, she thought to have won him. With the thawing ice, so soon as navigation was possible again, the escape was to be carried out; and money, ever more and more money, was required. Some letters from her were already in Johannes' hands; written answers from him were persistently refused. Ever again were



patience and trust necessary, as doubt and anxieties arose in her mind ; but she dared not spurn the hand, the only one, that could help her.

It belonged to her position and circumstances that she was limited to a narrow circle. She had often thought that, among the men with whom Johannes had associated for so long a time, there must be one who could take the work in hand and carry it out better than she could ; but an attempt which she had boldly made with one had proved a failure. Johannes was not imprisoned for political reasons ; no party matter could be made of his liberation, and the interest for the private individual was but feeble. She knew, therefore, that she was alone, and that with her own feeble hands she had to remove a mountain of hindrances and impossibilities. The only hand which would help her was not to be relied on ; but it was the only one, and she must resign herself to it.

In her family, and among her acquaintances, Franziska was now unnoticed and forgotten. She had heavily offended her brother in having made Klaren her trustee ; and as the mother took her daughter's side, there was no longer any intercourse between them. Franziska had requested her mother to spend the winter in seclusion. Her

health had improved, for with the gleam of hope that had lighted upon her, she had gained repose and self-command. Frau Warning had, as she said, passed through so many sufferings in her life, that she was reconciled to the postponement of her hope for Franziska's happiness to an uncertain future. Franziska was grateful to her, and often exhibited a cheerfulness which her heart did not possess. The mother reproached her with selfishly having only herself in view, and Franziska kept her intentions secret. 'A time will come,' she thought, 'when I *can* and will compensate for my present sin.' Among her family and acquaintances she was considered humoursome and deficient in interest; for anyone engaged in intricate and stealthy schemes loses the unconstrained openness and equability which is the beautiful result of inward peace. The necessity of keeping her doings a secret, even from her mother, had strained her nerves to the utmost. She, on whose lips no word of untruth had ever come, was now indulging in nothing but subterfuges and lies, in order to conceal her plans. Her intercourse with the jailer's wife might be revealed at any moment. Fortune had hitherto helped her in this venture, and in the loss of reputation and position. Her friend Klaren was the pretext for

her absence from home. Her mother was not without fears that Franziska would now perfect herself fully as a musician, and Franziska had expressed this intention to several of her acquaintances. Klaren was regarded as her allurer, and the family already anticipated the disgrace of seeing the name of one of their family paraded on the concert announcements at the street corners. If only Franziska, in her vanity and love of geniuses, would not exhibit herself in Hamburg! Franziska submitted patiently to everything; she had succeeded in diverting attention from her actual being and doings. In a large town much is practicable which is impossible elsewhere.

Once the jailer had told her suddenly that all that he had hitherto done would lead to nothing. He had now hit upon the idea of going himself also to America, otherwise it might prove his ruin. We leave it to be inferred what plans he brought forward, and what he demanded for their execution.

The deeper insight Franziska gained into everything, the more she felt that her brother was right when he had always spoken alone of impossibilities. But in her heart was the feeling of the old song, in which it says :—

And round and round the tower she went,  
That tower she longed to open wide ;  
And though the night had been a year,  
No hour had found her from its side.

' Could I,' she said, ' the dagger wear,  
Like any strong and valiant knight,  
I would brave the Lord of Falkenstein,  
And for my true love I would fight.'

At the end of the winter she had herself discovered something to help forward the plan which the jailer had placed before her. She had learned that among the vessels which lay frozen up in the harbour there was the ship belonging to Captain Ocke Hinrich, and he was Johannes' relation, and *must* help. The captain had been away more than three years, plying his vessel between China and the west coast of America ; and now that the vessel had been lying all the winter in the harbour, and the crew had been partly paid off, he had had leave of absence at Föhr. Franziska had written there, but had received no answer, for the captain never took pen in hand but on business ; but he paid her a visit when he came again to Hamburg. The destination of his vessel this time was California. He fancied it was a lady who desired to have information respecting passage-money ; and though this did not concern him, he was good-natured enough to visit the urgent petitioner. Franziska could not see him

frequently at her mother's house; she met him, therefore, at a place agreed on, and the captain offered to help her in carrying out her desire. Johannes' deliverance was to him also a good deed. He knew ways and means to keep both Johannes and the jailer, who wished to go too, concealed till the vessel was on its way. At that time there were no electric telegraphs, speaking voiceless through the air, over mountain heights and through ocean depths, to bring back with the speed of the wind some unhappy outlaw.

The jailer had really been half inclined to decamp. He had notified Johannes as ill, so that he was placed in the hospital. Franziska lived between hope and fear, in a state of suspense, which became more intense day by day. If she had only a word, only a sign of life from Johannes himself. But on this point she advanced not a step further; she had not ventured to demand anything of the rough, violent, covetous man; but she declined persistently to pay the sum in advance which he wished to take with him as a reward for the escape. Franziska knew that money was her power; she gave it away without hesitating, but she persisted that *this* sum should only be paid through the captain when Johannes was actually free. She had money lying ready in

gold and bills of exchange, and she would be able to provide for him also.

Owing to the severe winter and other circumstances, the vessel had been too long detained for the vacillating mind of the jailer. His wife had returned, his salary had been raised, his post was good ; he had already drawn from Franziska money amounting to some thousand marks. The man reckoned that she could give more, that she *must* give more, and that then there was always time for the scheme which he still meant to defer.

It was a terrible day to Franziska, when she saw the vessel, with its sails spread, passing down the river ; and she had to announce to the captain that her cares and hopes had been in vain !

A kind of despair had utterly overwhelmed her, when the swindling jailer enumerated to her a number of casual impediments which must frustrate the well-devised plan. In reply to the reproaches she cast against him, the man had opened the door and requested her to go out ; and Franziska, overcoming her feelings, had again returned to the subject. Mockingly, he told her that she could go to law, if she thought she had right on her side. She had to endure reproaches of niggardliness and stinginess, and

what she had half seen through, she now saw as it really was: she had caught herself in the net she had woven. But she thought that Johannes would suffer for the anger which the jailer had heaped upon her, and she spoke to the man till he was friendly again, calling down upon himself eternal damnation if he was not innocent of the failure of the scheme. She thought therefore, 'Drag deeper through the sand,' and again she placed money on the table, because the man demanded it for expenses incurred.

She now constrained her heart to courage and endurance. She still thought of deliverance; but her hope was like a light, which flickers feebly as it dies out. Resignation was her prayer, both for herself and him.

It was a weary time, and she thought, 'What will the end be?'

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE FIRE.

ON the 5th of May the fire-bell reverberated from all the towers of Hamburg ; and the flames, terrible and desolating in the fury of the unfettered element, roared through the streets. At noon the Nickolai church, with its high old tower, was in flames, and the city was in danger. From street to street the fire advanced with invincible power ; whole rows of houses broke in like decayed scaffoldings ; the fiery breath had touched them, and nothing more was to be seen of them but a heap of ashes and ruins. Then women and children fled in crowds from the streets where the fire threatened them, bringing with them carts and carriages to save their possessions. They thronged towards the gates or on the walls, encamping in the open air, and leaving behind them their empty dwellings, that the flames might satiate themselves with their fury, and then advance onwards in their consuming power. In vain they plied the engines, worked and rescued, untiled roofs, blew



up houses, and at length whole streets. With a terrible roar, like some thunder-clap, the buildings fell in ruins. Thousands of human beings sat amongst their rescued possessions, in the fields outside the gates ; the sick and dying had been dragged there also. Many who brought with them nothing but bare life, sat pale with fear and terror, and many citizens of the good town wept for their beloved Hamburg, which had endured so much in the siege, during the fearful French period ; and now, when it had again risen to prosperity, was it utterly to perish ?

For three days the fire lasted. Without intermission, without cessation, the fearful blaze rose towards heaven, and the horizon for miles was dyed blood-red. The men who could help began already to be weary and indolent. The bands of order, which at no time were very tightly drawn in Hamburg, loosened more and more ; crowds of excited, half-drunken people roamed about, dashing to pieces household implements, costly mirrors, and objects of luxury, in the forsaken but still unconsumed houses. Uncomfortable rumours of incendiaries who were setting fire to the part of the town still untouched, and increasing the universal destruction, were circulated among the people. Many upon whom it was incumbent to

maintain order, gave way to inactive despair. On Saturday morning the depression was general, for the end of the conflagration was not to be seen. A strong dry east wind was blowing and aiding the flames, fanning their fiery breath and carrying them further among the scorched and dry buildings. Soon the vessels in the upper harbour were no longer safe. The new Exchange had been saved by great effort; two churches were, however, still burnt down, and the Town Hall lay in ashes. Then the fire took the direction of the House of Correction in the Alster quarter, where the State kept its criminals in confinement.

Franziska had fled with her mother to some friends who lived outside the Damm gate. Her brother, disregarding his just rancour, had begged them, in such a great calamity, to take refuge in his house; the fire, however, left the street in which they lived unconsumed.

‘Where is a limit placed to fire, at what place will it be said, “Hitherto shalt thou come and no further?”’ Such was the sigh which she had heard again and again from her desponding mother. Both mother and daughter, however, endeavoured, in the general misery, to join the energetic men and women who provided the houseless with food and comfort. Frau Warning

roused herself in the distress of those days, and Franziska helped her mother. Accommodation was sought for the sufferers in the country-houses outside the town, in stables and coach-houses, in the halls and apartments of large mansions. Whoever knew himself secure, felt the need of rendering assistance to others.

On the Saturday Franziska had gone early into the town, pressing her way through the crowds of human beings standing about on the wall and on the Lombard-bridge, for the report that the prisoners in the House of Correction were to be removed and conveyed for the time to a place of safety on a large vessel in the harbour, had reached her ears. Alas! ever since she had seen the city in flames, she had had a feeling as if the fire had been kindled, so that the door of his prison might be burst open! Now terrified women and girls reported that the Senate had lost their senses. Expecting to see the prison-house burst into flames, one of the gentlemen had counselled that the men should be allowed to go away with an exhortation.

There was no truth in the rumour, but the dread of criminals let loose was added to the other horrors.

Franziska pressed through the crowds, through

the dense mob, and through every class, without caring whom she ran against or whom she saw.

On the bridge all was so closely hemmed in by the city militia, that she could go no further. Some gentlemen whom she knew were at work at the pumps. It was seven o'clock in the morning. The wind was blowing strongly; dust, heat, and tumult were all around. Franziska drew her veil closer, and turned to an officer, with the request to let her pass, that she might go to her relations. The officer let her through, and she reached the jailer's dwelling, just as the woman was starting with a carriage-full of her possessions.

The man came from the upper story of the house and looked shyly round him. 'To-night, when it is dark,' he whispered to Franziska; 'but go, that no one may see you.' 'I hear,' said Franziska, 'that the men are to be placed under a military escort and brought two and two to the harbour.'

'Hush!' said the man; 'where is he to go?' Franziska wrote a few words in her pocket-book; the man tore out the leaf, and gave her back her book. 'Do you wish to ruin me?' he said; 'what is the use of the thing?'

‘Then this evening?’ said Franziska, in a low tone. The man nodded, and ran towards the main building, where they were calling for him.

Franziska scarcely knew how she pressed through; but she was out of the throng, and standing on the Lombard-bridge. She felt nothing more, neither anxiety nor fear of man, neither heat nor cold. She might have been spat upon or trampled under foot; it was indifferent to her.

She went to her brother, who lived in the Esplanade. It was his address which she had given the jailer. The street to-day seemed quiet as the grave, because it was secure from the fire. Her friend Klaren had taken flight at the very first; in her own house other people were living; her brother must help! It was a time when unheard-of things took place.

Herr Warning could not see her at that hour, and begged that Franziska would come again in the afternoon. He belonged to the number of those merchants who preserve their presence of mind in great calamities, who give information to their correspondents, and who meet together and unite for the averting of possible money stagnation and business crises. These men regarded the misfortune as a passing one, so long as

the town was not assailed in its vital principle—credit and commerce. He was overwhelmed with business. Franziska had time and must wait. She went away, therefore, spent the day with her mother, and no one had any idea what was passing with regard to her, and was to happen.

That afternoon, at the hour appointed by her brother, she was again at his house, and told him everything. It seemed to Herr Warning as if he were listening to fairy-tales and fables; and, cruel as it was in her condition, he could not forbear expressing his blame and doubts. ‘Into what hands,’ he said, ‘had she fallen, with what a man in her weak credulity had she meddled with!’ It was impossible to carry out what the jailer had promised, and on this day, when the whole town was in motion. He himself that morning had met the wretched train of men, and a great military convoy had been in attendance. In the transport of the prisoners none had escaped, or it would have been heard of. The House of Correction was now on fire; it was fearful how the storm raged in the smoke and flame!

Franziska was prepared to receive reproaches and hard words. She begged her brother to

put up with the burden and trouble which she imposed upon him, and to forgive her, only not to draw back when she implored him for mercy and help! Her painfully agitated countenance inspired her brother with pity. Matters had, moreover, as regarded her scheme, come to a point in which he considered it behoved the interest of the family not to let her go further alone.

In the upper story of the house there was a room, of which he himself kept the key. Herr Warning had here his hunting implements and other matters. His wife had already retired to the country. In the summer the house stood empty. The business rooms were on the ground floor. The servants were in the country. An old housekeeper, who kept the house in order and aired the rooms, had gone away in the commotion of the time. Herr Warning sent the man, who usually slept in the house, out into the country with a note to his wife; the man was to bring the answer back in the morning. Franziska had to write to her mother that she was going to keep her sister-in-law company, for she was afraid to be alone when her husband was obliged to remain the night in town.

When all were gone, and Franziska was alone

in the house with her brother, she ventured to carry up to the room all that the fugitive would find necessary for the first few days. After that time Herr Warning would have found out what to do next, and how to care for his safety.

So the night came on. Her brother was in his room. Franziska was sitting in a little room on the ground floor. The bell was suspended to the house door; the door stood ajar; a night-lamp was burning on the little table before her. It was silent as the grave on the Esplanade, as it was in all the streets where the fire had not reached, and therefore there were no crowds. Patrols of citizens, who had formed into bands, and had armed themselves for general protection, passed frequently by. The fire was still burning; occasionally a fearful roar was heard; then again, from some sudden gust of wind, the doors and window-shutters in the street clattered, and the red glow lighted up the room with a ghastly glare. Hour after hour went by. Franziska trembled at every footstep on the pavement. At last, from one moment to the other, she waited, listened, watched; no one came.

The morning dawned; gradually it grew into day. Calm and pale, Franziska thanked her



brother and went home to her mother. It was Sunday morning, and men were beginning to breathe again. It was said that the wind had veered round, and was driving the flames toward the Alster. The joyful tidings went from ear to ear, from mouth to mouth. It was said that the fire could now be subdued; that it was under control. The wild and terrible element had exhausted its fury, and its rage was at an end. Thousands of human beings breathed again, and felt themselves once more free.

Franziska went about calmly and quietly, as if utterly broken down. She now believed what her brother had said, that the jailer had deceived her this time also.

The ruins still smoked for many days. Watches were placed at various points of the conflagration. A part of the once animated town lay like a great ruin, invested with the poetry of desolation and solitude.

Life and business, however, began to revive; and the journals and public papers were again issued. There, among the news, and notices of those who had been burned or who had perished, stood the statement that Johannes Jakob, the murderer of the unfortunate Herr D——, had

escaped in the transport of the prisoners ; he had been missed at the departure from the prison ; he was a resolute man, of great physical strength and presence of mind ; and on the scene of the fire no trace had been found of charred human bones. Among the official advertisements was a notice to the police, and the warrant for capture soon found its way into all papers.

It was some days before Franziska could at last speak with the jailer. The man swore a solemn oath that he had given both money and address. What had become of him he knew not ; he had left the door open for him to escape ; he could not be made responsible for the success.

Franziska had done her utmost. Fate seemed resolved to break pitilessly her tender heart. Her brother, however, was thoroughly satisfied that all had turned out thus—that the honour of the family was not exposed. Nothing had happened to make Franziska a subject of remark. He could and would settle matters with the jailer, in order to secure her from all rudeness and further extortion, and he did so with decision and success. Franziska thanked him, and all seemed now ended and concluded.

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She heard nothing from Johannes. For months, asleep or awake, she seemed to hear his cry for help. She saw him chased by dogs, like a hunted animal; she saw him again captured, shut up in an iron cage, and tortured to death. Her imagination endured these torments; but all remained quiet, the unhappy man was not captured; the criminal had escaped the avenging hand of justice. Something of repose now came over her. But when she went over the ruins of the city, the sight scarcely agitated her. Her foot stirred up the dust, and she thought, 'This is our end, the end of all our most ardent wishes and efforts!'

Franziska at length fell into a fever; and when she rose again from her sick bed, and went out into the open air for the first time with her mother, she seemed to have grown many years older. She had lost her abundant hair; her eyes were dim; but she rejoiced to see the sun again! The vast expanse of sky and the fresh air did her good; the green turf, the smell of the fields, the song of the birds, the hum of the insects, penetrated into her very heart, like a greeting from kindly-healing nature. She threw her arm round her mother's neck and looked at her lovingly, and told her that she was glad to be with her and still to live.

She knew now, however, that she must leave Johannes, and all that concerned him, in God's hand; and that henceforth, with earnest resolve, she must direct her life and feelings into other channels.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.











